

monthly paper in Britain of the International Communist Current

WORLD REVOLUTION

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The working class can and must spread its struggles



matter how militant the workers involved, no struggle can remain isolated in one sector

enter the second half of the decade our ex-
perts are telling us that there's no point in
bargaining: We may as well submit to the facts of
the economic crisis. Meanwhile we can
watch the spectacle of our leaders preaching
peace and shaking hands across the table while the
clouds of the nuclear holocaust are looming.
It's the point in fighting back when everything
read and see and hear tells us that we are now-
where?

The terror and misery of capitalism in its agony is real enough. But our exploiters know how to turn even the disintegration of their system to their advantage, by representing it as a message of despair and impotence for the millions of the exploited and oppressed throughout the world. Why? Not because the bourgeoisie control this system are simply sick or insane, even though they must of necessity express sickness and insanity of a decadent system which murders millions through war, famine or rampage of exploitation.

No, the bourgeoisie today is screaming so loudly that we, the working class, are powerless to affect events precisely because reality proves otherwise. Today, coming into the second half of the eighties, we are seeing the development

Liverpool council: leftism derails the class struggle

Today the bourgeoisie in Britain is making a propaganda campaign over the 'sell out' of leftist-led Liverpool Council and the activities of the Trotskyist Militant Tendency inside Labour Party. This campaign has the aim of demobilising the working class and preventing it from defending its own interests and living

ditions. It attacks the class in two ways: first, the left in Liverpool calls on the class struggle—but for a defence of the local machine and the Labour Party which runs it capitalism. Workers are told that the only to resist unemployment and the slashing of minimal services of the 'welfare state' is to

the potential of the working-class is not a utopian dream; it is unfolding already in not just seeing the struggles, but the development of the proletariat. The potential of other workers is not to be easily expressed, but it is really powerful enough to resist even temporarily the bourgeoisie's ravages in the struggle for the well-being of the working-class. The divisions between sectors of the working-class are already under a unified attack by the capitalist class, to go beyond such divisions which serve only capital's interests and to unify at a higher, collective level.

The unification of the struggle is on the

The Unification of the struggles is on the agenda for the working class today, and it is the vital task of revolutionaries to intervene in these struggles, to point to this very real perspective towards extension against all the false perspectives of the bourgeoisie.

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very real suspicion of the left's manoeuvrings, and its hesitation in the face of capitalist's fierce attacks, in order to ram home its message

that all resistance to the crisis is useless, and that socialism is a racket or a utopia.

For revolutionaries, the 'fiasco' of Liverpool not only proves once again the reactionary capitalist role of the left, but also that, confronted by such attacks, the working class must turn its passive suspicion of the left and its uncertainty about the aims of its struggle into an active defence of its own interests against all its exploiters, right and left.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE UNEMPLOYED IS A POLITICAL STRUGGLE

In the South-East of England alone, there are at least forty separate unions or 'claims' groups, local and national, in the London and South-East Unemployed Federation (LASUEF). At a recent federation meeting, there were representatives of groups from the midlands, Birmingham, Nottingham, and a new meeting of the forthcoming meeting of groups in the north of England. Together with groups adhering to the old Claimants Unions which were merged into LASUEF, there are now over 100 groups in LASUEF (Homeless Against Social Security Lodging Limits) formed to fight around single issues. There is evidence of a considerable and growing international network of unemployed organisations in Britain.

The growth of these groups is the first sign of their efforts to overcome the isolation imposed upon unemployed workers and those who've never had the 'privilege' of being exploited by capitalism, and their active resistance to the capitalist state. These groups are an undeniable reflection of the centrality of unemployment as the issue determining the evolution of the present international resurgence of class struggle.

This milieu of the unemployed is developed from those groups created by, or adhered closely to, the trade unions and local workers' councils - groups created precisely to prevent the self-organisation and development of unemployed workers. These groups in the capitalist state not only the police and the Tory Party, but the Labour Party and unions as well. This goes hand in hand, to a greater or lesser extent, with a struggle to defend the unemployed to resist the attacks of the state, but also of fighting to abolish the existing order of capitalist society: 'Labour, Conservative and all the other capitalist parties are trying to stop us. They want to stop us. They want to manage the system which puts power, profits and property before people. They want to stop us from fighting for what we need. So nothing is as it appears to be, we could have an open society where sharing and mutual aid replace greed and competition. This is what we want to fight for. It will not be won through elections and politicians. It will take a worldwide social revolution and the overthrow of the capitalist system. In the meantime we can learn and discover our strengths by organising ourselves independently and fighting for temporary improvements.'

(Leifheit at the Barnsbury (London) Claimants Union)

However, in the LASUEF such groups co-exist happily with other organisations of claimants who are not linked to the unions and Labour Party. These pamphlets, leaflets and public meetings are essentially propaganda for the left apparatus of the capitalist state.

In short, the appearance and activity of these groups concretises the development of consciousness within the class, it also develops the extreme heterogeneity of this development and the pressure of the dominant ideology.

THE 'FEAR OF POLITICS' AND THE UNFAIR GROUPS

The unemployed groups are not political groups and correctly don't see themselves as such. Most of them are trying to be 'independent', 'united' or dependent on state benefits.

But this necessary refusal to become tied to one particular political expression is all too often replaced by a political passivity.

On the one hand, the political questions are unresolved. If the trade unions and the Labour Party can be used by the working class, then it is necessary that they be used.

On the other hand, they are not used.

This fear of politics was well illustrated

at a meeting in London of the LASUEF in November. The meeting, which was attended by around forty people representing over a dozen assorted organisations, was opened with a speech by the ICC, which showed how the refusal to discuss political issues threatens to undermine what the groups see as their own raison d'être at a number of levels.

On the one hand, the 'independent' organisations

through a tendency to refuse to confront

or even recognise the necessity to confront

political differences with themselves

itself, this milieu opens itself up to being used

by the capitalist state.

As we've pointed out,

already some groups are little more than mouth-

pieces of the Labour Party - hardly an 'independent' existence!

At the LASUEF meeting there was a refusal to discuss the political demands between the groups on the nature of the Labour Party, the TUC and unions in general, despite the fact that a clear majority of those present described how these organisations and their affiliated organisations (which in general, are housed and financed by unions or trade unions) to act on their own initiative to propose a new constitution for the Labour Party or union campaign.

If the meeting rejected a suggestion to appeal to Labour and the unions for more support - we can't see the illusion that Labour and the unions

(Continued on page 3)

UNIONS & BOSSES UNITE TO CUT JOBS

In the first week of November Robert Maxwell, owner of the *Evening Standard* and *News of the World*, issued redundancy notices to 1,000 workers at the *News of the World* in Clerkenwell, London. The Sunday editions are printed. All this while calling on MGN workers in London to strike (although only for a day) against redundancies. In reality all these workers are already redundant.

At MGN the union has adopted a traditional posture of harnessing the discontent of the workforce to strike, to demand the reinstatement of the workers, to negotiate with the management, it, and arguing instead for further negotiations. In this way, the unions aim to convince the workers that there is a possibility of a reasonable outcome. But the bosses, having been given a resounding vote for strike action in which the NGA machine minders came out alongside SOGAT workers, the unions turned out alongside SOGAT workers, and the workers voted to strike, have now, after only 24 hours, with both unions and management claiming satisfaction and success. In a clever joint operation, first Maxwell withdrew his redundancy notices, then SOGAT accepted a victory and ended the strike. But the unions also agreed to produce an alternative plan for costs and job cuts by 10 December. In other words, the unions have taken a back-handed blow for the attack on the workers at MGN and if it gets through with shedding less than 2,000 jobs, a further strike is likely to be a victory. A victory indeed for union-management engineered lay-offs.

This strategy of SOGAT is evidence of the general strategy of unions to ensure that management policy is carried out with a minimum of disruption. The unions will often simulate the anger and opposition of the workers to the attacks of management at the same time direct workers' militancy into isolated pockets of workers with no perspective for mounting a real fight against the bosses.

To take another example, NGA and SOGAT have already accepted the proposed closure of the MGN Thomas Whity Grove plant in Manchester but have mobilised the workforce for strike action

... against the level of redundancy payments! and they have traditionally taken standoffs of the MGN workers in Clerkenwell, London. The Sunday editions are printed. All this while calling on MGN workers in London to strike (although only for a day) against redundancies. In reality all these workers are already redundant.

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(Continued on page 3)

ANGLO-IRISH ACCORD: MORE TERROR, MORE LIES

"Why does the bourgeoisie go through these charades? Because it's to do otherhelse it would have to abandon the mask of democracy. It's to do otherhelse it would have to abandon the problems of the working class in Ulster. In other words, the present activity of the army, the police, the secret service, the paramilitary and para-military organisations, the real policy of terror is the bourgeoisie's solution" for Ulster. (UPI 20 November 1982)

We paid for these years in answer to the bourgeoisie's still-born Northern Ireland Assembly, and it is this which applies equally to the latest charade, the Anglo-Irish Agreement between Britain and Gladys

The Agreement contains three basic elements:

- a consultative, though not executive, say of the British government in the affairs of Northern Ireland;

- the recognition by Eire of the union between Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom (1);

- the withdrawal of the active state machine of Northern Ireland and the South against the "gunmen".

There is hardly anything new in this "accord". The Ulster bourgeoisie is already consulted by the British government on Northern Irish affairs, and Eire has in reality accepted the British government's role in Northern Ireland. The armies and police forces of North and South already cooperate in the job of state repression.

The Agreement is indeed another charade.

The Ulster bourgeoisie's Agreement will not be found in its stated aims announced with greatest fanfare in the media.

Opposition to the Ulster bourgeoisie's Agreement is part of the whole game. The Ulster Unionist party mobilised 100,000 people in Belfast to denounce this "toxic" Agreement. The SDLP, who resign their seats in Westminster in order to mount a full-blown re-election campaign against Dublin having already stated that the Ulster bourgeoisie have threatened to make the peace impossible.

But this threat is just the predictable part of the whole ideological campaign.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement, another round in the phoney battle between the British Government and its allies in the western bloc - who are supposed to want peace, unity and harmony in Northern Ireland - and the people of Ireland, whether it's the Paisleyites or the Gerry Adams, who are determined to thwart them at every step.

The Ulster bourgeoisie's Agreement appears to have repudiated republicans, who want so much, already exists in all but name. In terms of economic relationships, political rule and the representation of the working class, power in Ireland are already held in Westminster, aided

by the

IRA. In this context we have to correct any impression given by a periodical like the Ulster Observer in the UK that the British bourgeoisie is in any way "disengaging" from its rule of Northern Ireland, or that its current strategy implies a withdrawal of sectarian divisions within the working class.

The perspectives adopted at this Congress insist that huge outbreaks of class struggle are inevitable in the pre-condition of the economic period in which we live. Within these outbreaks, the capacity of revolutionaries to form a real organisation of political combat is an indispensable condition of the development of the class struggle towards the perspective of the world communist revolution. This is the objective of the International Communist Current.

(25.11.82)

UNEMPLOYED STRUGGLE
(Continued from page 8)

their role as 'social workers' for the unemployed. Unemployment is not an individual affliction, but a consequence of the crisis of a bankrupt political system.

On the level of broadening its influence and encouraging others to join or form their own

and supported by the central power structures of the Western bloc - the US, NATO etc, under the hegemony of US imperialism.

Far from desiring a solution to the 'mess' in the North, this mess is fuelled in the interests of the bourgeoisie, who through its covert manipulation of its illegal paramilitary supporters the IRA, UVF, etc, and its legal forces of repression the RUC and army, backed up by ideological forces like the one around the Anglo-Irish Agreement. (1)

What the whole Western bourgeoisie fears in Northern Ireland is not socialism or a bloodshed, which are out of one's making. Its real fear is the threat of the working class struggle and the threat of the growing unity.

The present situation, among the poorest in Western Europe, with the worst housing and living conditions, and the most ferocious repression. Unemployment in Northern Ireland for example, is over 20 percent. Conditions which, as elsewhere, are steadily deteriorating, are providing the objective basis for the workers to go beyond sectarian divisions and wage their struggle.

The maintenance and stoking-up of sectarian divisions is one of the bourgeoisie's main efforts to another, more threatening, angle.

Assembly, and temporarily diverting the attention of workers from the defence of their living conditions, is another episode in the bourgeoisie's ideological and terror campaign against the potential class unity of the proletariat.

This will to intervention in the proletariat is corroborated by the content of the review, where a large place is given to an intervention drawn from the miners' strike in Britain, containing an introduction from the collective, followed by texts from the ICC and the ICOR.

The will to intervene themselves in the international revolutionary milieu is also shown in the presence of an International Debate section which, in this issue, is in agreement with the IBRP on its conception of the 'reconstruction of the party'.

As the editorial rightly says: "Today more than ever, practical necessity exists for the rising movements to extend and generalise, breaking with all corporatism, affirming the necessity of an organisation of revolutionaries on an international scale, which poses the question of the bases of the political party of the proletariat". Greetings to Communism!

(1) See International Review 40 and 41

Altratina: Apartado Postal 21-984 CP 4000 Mexico, DF

AP IS NOW

A NEWSPAPER!

The review *Action Proletaria*, organ of the ICC in Spain, is now produced as a newspaper. It is the response of revolutionaries to the developing needs of intervention in the third wave of revolution. The newspaper is a response to the resurgence of class struggle internationally. It is necessary that the voice of revolutionaries in Spain be heard in the international debate in the development of class consciousness, showing what's at stake in the struggle and the obstacles the bourgeoisie put in the way of the proletariat.

But conversely, when Catholic and Protestant workers struggle together on a scale which can be compared with the working class media, then workers elsewhere will be given the tremulous example in overcoming their own divisions.

This is the real danger which is behind the concerns of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and other charades.

(25.11.82)

**INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CURRENT
INTERNATIONAL REVIEW**

Central organ of the ICC
No. 43, 4th Quarter 1985
75p / \$1.50

* Ideological campaigns of the bourgeoisie against the class struggle

* Eastern bloc: both feet in the capitalist crisis

* 1905 revolution: basic lesson for the proletariat

* Reply: '85-86 on the subterranean maturation of consciousness

* Internal debate: opportunism and centrism in the working class and its organisations

NEXT INTERNATIONAL REVIEW
No 44, 1st Quarter 1986

Will include Reports and Resolutions and a Conference Resolution from the Sixth ICC Congress.

Also: Salvo Communista
And: From Zimmerwald to Kienthal

With: Analysis of the developing class struggle.

tension, a
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and its Sixth International, the ICC resolutely stands in opposition to interventionist struggles. The prospect of imperialist domination, ravaging and massive unemployment in the sectors of the proletariat, is a certainty. It is also a certainty that the ICC will pose the question of a revolutionary organisation. It is a certainty that the ICC will live up to the task it is presented with. It is a certainty that the revolution will oppose the imperialist barbarism.

that the Congress, which is to be convened the moment when it is invited in, will adopt a political balance-sheet of its perspectives for the next Congress, by adopting an international situation, on the basis of the workers' movement in the workers' movement for activity of the proletariat, political and cultural presentation of a series of documents, the next International (quarter of 1980). Here we

- the half-century previous revolution
- the disappearance of fractions which can
- the distrust now

CLASS STRUGGLE AND political organisation of the bourgeoisie, which is

882, the ICC designated 'years of truth', in which what was at stake in the world would be clearly revealed. A decade, the evolution of situation has fully confirmed the function of sensations, expressed through a military expenditure and the winning campaign of war ideology the chief of the most

ence, in the second part of
to after their momentary re-
sisting and following the re-
surgence in Poland. This resurgence
ed in particular by an upsur-
p of struggles, especially in
capitalism and of the work-
Europe....

a historic course towards in no way implies that the opposing struggle in a contemporary epoch is inevitable. Such a view would be totally historical experience of would contradict what Marx and Engels and which Lenin and Stalin have written on the class struggle in the progress frontonts with capitalism. International Situation

cs of the present period in lapse of capitalism into the combativity and maturing of a proletariat which hasn't yet defeated but which has been revolutionary experience of the strategy of the left in opposition. This means that workers' struggle is using against the means in an uneven and relating. The first obstacle these

against that is that of trade union-
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future development of
*vertical necessities of the
international and self-organisa-
tion of the working class
workers, to develop among
workers through the
different union federations or
and the 'leadership';
class struggle on the cor-
or socialist terrain;*

which, when it does, is done in a haphazard way which presents extension as something to be achieved 'in GB' or even to the one enterprise (Bennetts) in a haphazard way. The struggle for self-organisation, by itself, will not be enough to bring about the revolution. It must be carried through to the heart of the bourgeoisie which, at the same time, is the essential strategy of the left in the struggle for power. At the same time, a real political struggle against the bourgeoisie must avoid this political split on it. It cannot and must not divide and unites to maintain in the defence of the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. (b) The struggle towards decisive victory will be determined by the working class to extend the consciousness and the life of the working class. (c) The unification of the unaligned organisations of the ICC has been delayed, debated, on the nature of the difficulties faced by the organisation, and on the nature of the revolutionary group in general, and on the nature of the class struggle and the role of the working class in the development of its consciousness. The ICC was faced with the presence, in its own ranks, of concessions to the ideology and practices of the bourgeois left. The ICC has always insisted on its rejection of the communist conception of class consciousness and of the function of the communist in revolutionary organisations. These concessions were made in the direction of a shift towards councilism, expressing not only the weaknesses of the ICC but also the more general conditions in which the consciousness of the working class is classed as the main factor of revolution. The more general framework within which this position was adopted was the question of the perspectives of the end of oppression and the centrist expression of the struggle of the bourgeoisie ideology, and of its penetration into proletarian organisations. This was linked to an abandonment of the proletariat's primary task in its Marxist method of struggle, that is, utilising the positions of the working class and the positions of the enemy class. On these questions, we refer readers to texts and publications in the ICC on the dangers of councilism, on opportunism as a central factor to the resolution adopted and the counter-resolution rejected by the Sixth Congress of the ICC, which will be published in *Internal* (LUL, Berlin), No. 44.

and upon its responsibilities and its further contributions in an essential section of the ICC. It is our territorial publicists and to militant and democratic' milies, and on our still militant political groups.

PEASANT OPPORTUNISM AND THE COMMUNIST ELEMENT: THE IMPATIENT TENDENCY

During the previous Congress

the ICC does not 'debate' minorities or 'titles' and, if the comrades still have a minimum of lucidity, they well know this. In order to defend the positions which the communists have taken, there need not to constitute yet another group in a sectarian and militaristic milieu already broken by sectarianism and the conception of 'everyone to their own group'. On the contrary, the very fact that the constitution of a so-called 'fraction' is not justified. It can only be explained if, in reality, something else is hidden behind what is

WILDCAT TAILENDS THE RIOTS

After three waves of social revolts in Britain's inner cities (1980, 81, 82), communists have been asked to clarify the essential content of their intervention on this question:

- first of all, insisting that workers must affirm their right to self-organisation; these revolts, engendered by the misery and repression of capitalism in crisis, and thus reject any notion of solidarity with the state or the police;
- secondly, pointing out that, for themselves, these revolts don't have the same dynamic towards extension, self-organisation, and politicisation as the class struggle in the working-class (employed and unemployed) - consequently communists don't call for 'more riots' but for the intervention of the proletariat in its own terrain, to offer a way forward to the elements involved in these movements.

In this context, what has been the response of the councilist current? We can best answer this by looking at the latest issue of *WILDCAT* (No. 7), which they call their 'Riot Special'. In a double page article called 'Support the Riots', Wildcat displays:

- a brief intervention to the immediate consciousnesses of the riots and thus an inability to defend a proletarian political perspective towards them;
- a pathetic tailending of the anarchist/libertarian swamp.

CAPITULATING TO IMMEDIACY

"The growing organisation and ferocity of riots in Britain is a tremendous step forward in the situation. We totally support the riots."

(Wildcat, 7)

The ferocity of the riots is undoubtedly a reflection of the growing tension between the classes in today's period. But neither this, nor the fact that many of the 'rioters' are unemployed proletarians, is sufficient to explain the riots' particular character. The class struggle emerges, and classes define themselves, around the struggle against the economic exploitation of the proletariat. But this class struggle encounters the workers' fight against state repression, not every fight against state repression is a workers' struggle. The riots begin to define themselves as the struggle of individuals, the 'community', 'black people'... consequently they do not in themselves enable the working-class to defend its own interests if itself as a class. This is why their repression is particularly vulnerable to racial and other inter-class mystifications.

This also implies that the riots can't

develop the methods of the proletariat struggle, contrary to Wildcat's pretensions of "Many of the working class inhabitants of Britain's cities have learned the lessons of the defeat of the '81 uprisings. At Tottenham, the police had to be called in to restore order and regain control the next day... The level of organisation which seems to have taken place before and during the riots show that it's not just the 'veterans who've been planning what to do since '81.'

It's perfectly true that, like all popular movements, the riots are a spontaneous collective initiative and organisation. But again, this isn't enough to define them as proletarian. What characterises proletarian struggle is the development of collective creativity but the development of collective,

SINKING INTO THE ANARCHIST SWAMP

The desire to gain an echo by calling in to the immediate consciousness of a social layer (a localised factionalism) can lead Wildcat to tail-end the New Look anarchism typified by the Class War group, now reputedly selling 15,000 copies of its paper and the subject of much publicity. Wildcat's main problem is that the Class War is the fact that it reflects (like a distorted mirror) the general negativity that exists amongst growing numbers of young proletarians.

Wildcat's intervention to develop the proletarian's positive self-awareness, it turns this negativity at best towards acts of petty bourgeois hopelessness. (Example: 'In the 1970s, at first, the out-leftists (Class War recently tried to join the bourgeois 'Anti-Fascist Action' front, though apparently without success) and the New Look War-type anarchism on Wildcat is evident in the paper's increasing fetishisation of violence (sovereigns standing halves, many cops have been done in, lots of scenes of torture, etc, etc) and its pitiful attempts to ape CW's "racy" language (example: picture of riots with caption: "What a laugh... grinning rioters overturning a car" and so on).

MO

Wildcat hopes that all this will help them attain street-credibility, but it's a long way indeed from revolution to narrow-minded Class War type anarchism (18 vs 85) that the bulk of their paper ("Fuck the rich scumdogs", etc) aims to avoid "the usual theoretical crap", marxism is right for the working-class to hold the masses and to become a material force. Between these two irreconcilably opposed positions there is no middle ground - and Wildcat's slide towards anarchism is the clearest proof of this.

Publications of the ICC

ICC pamphlets

LONDON

North Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London WC1.

Tuesday December 10th at 7.30 pm

UNPREDICABLE CLASS FIGHTING

Tuesday January 14th at 7.30 pm

UNEMPLOYMENT: THE BOMB AT THE HEART OF

DECADENT CAPITALISM

Tuesday February 11th at 7.30pm

ARTISTS WORKERS MUST SPREAD THEIR STRUGGLES

OPEN MEETINGS The ICC also holds open meetings

for those who want to discuss and deepen any aspects of the ICC's politics. The next ones

will be in Conway Hall (Artists Room) at

3.30pm on Saturday 21st December and

18th January

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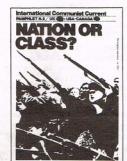
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PEACE TALKS TO DISARM THE WORKING CLASS



East or West, behind the peace talks Imperialism's drive toward war continues



The Reagan/Gorbachev summit meeting is just one of the many campaigns of the bourgeoisie that attempts to exploit the ruin and desolation of the old capitalist system to the advantage of the exploiters to the detriment of the consciousness of the working class in hopelessness, and passivity. In fact, the peace campaign, which is the main theme of the mounting threat of war, epitomises the whole of the bourgeoisie's effort to use the destructive logic of their own system against the working class. The peace campaign, which is just one of all the other campaigns about mass starvation, state terror in the underdeveloped countries, as well as in Europe, and everything else that hangs on the bourgeoisie's neck, is not demonstrated by one set of images taken from the crisis of the system, that still leaves the 'uncertain future' of the peace campaign, which promises a future much worse than what we have to live through today. And what makes the whole campaign relatively effective is the element of Hitler's 'blitzkrieg' strategy, which is to use no controlling influence to govern the entity between the Russian and American blocs. As the world economic crisis of capital deepens, the tensions between the two blocs, and the antagonisms between the blocks are raised to fever pitch.

There is however no uncertainty about the perspective of the bourgeoisie's strategy. The only question is to find its own 'solution' to its crisis - war will be the outcome, and, in this age, that means nuclear war. In reality, the bourgeoisie doesn't know what the bourgeoisie is out of control, we don't mean that the bourgeoisie doesn't know what they are doing - simply

that capitalism has become a completely irrational way of organising human affairs that is tending toward the destruction of the planet. For the bourgeoisie that future war is preparing to fight is based on the logic of all its actions, the governing preoccupation of their lives. This can clearly be seen in the mounting threat of war, the destruction of all life in society and the priority given to such military projects as the SDI (Star Wars).

From the beginning Reagan's election was the central strategy of the bourgeoisie to bring its left parties into opposition to better confront the class struggle. At the level of the bourgeoisie's campaign against the working class, the strategy of putting its left parties into opposition to peace, this strategy was brought to fruition with the 'Euro-missile' controversy (i.e. the introduction of Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe and Russia themselves). This gave ample scope for a huge mobilisation of the capitalist left in Western Europe, in protesting against the introduction of the missiles, while at the same time arguing for a more effective nuclear preparation for war.

In reality, the western states and such more

concerned about the peace campaign as the bourgeoisie than in multiplying the number of nuclear weapons than in multiplying the number of conventional weapons.

The bourgeoisie's strategy of war and peace for 'overkill'.

So even on this level the real

perspective of the bourgeoisie is

that we have to all the actions of the bourgeoisie was to whip up a terrain of resistance

working class from its own terrain of resistance

to capitalism's austerity and war drive.

The summit between Gorbachev and Reagan is the direct descendant of these earlier campaigns. Its preparation was signalled by the actual deployment of the missile defence system and the consequent Russian walk out from the arms talks. This cleared the way for the second act of the melodrama. The only difference now is that for the bourgeoisie it is not so much on the stage the role of capitalist 'peacemakers', rather than the left parties and the 'peace' movements. The reality behind this role is the continuing surge of the bourgeoisie on the stage of conventional weapons systems for Western Europe, and the development of Star Wars, designed to re-establish US supremacy on the level of strategic nuclear weapons. Russia has tried to keep up with the pace of all this, trying to keep up despite the fact that its economy is falling apart under the strains of capitalist development, and to continue to drive the development of the system towards generalised war.

While waging its propaganda campaigns of passive resistance, despair around these themes, the bourgeoisie is also continuing to search for an alternative to all this: the overthrow of capitalism by the working class. It is this perspective which introduces a real element of uncertainty into the situation. The only force that holds the bourgeoisie back from unleashing their immense potential of destruction is the working class, and this is shown by the struggle of the working class. On this level there is nothing divides Gorbachev and Reagan. This is why, in the midst of their very real military rivalry, they are both trying to bring the two blocs to create joint campaigns in order to stem the tide of the working class struggle.

The real importance of this liaison between the bourgeoisie in the establishment of the US and Russia to prevent a dangerous extension of the arms strike in Poland at the beginning of the eighties. It is through the joint propaganda broadcasts and negotiations on western 'aid' the west provided the necessary supports for the creation of the Solidarnosc trade union in Poland. The working class in Poland and the tanks were dangled as a threat over the workers' heads.

And similarly today, the Gorbachev/Reagan summit

and the rest of the international campaign on war and peace is intended to help prevent the arms strike, exemplified by the Polish workers, from taking hold of the centres of world capitalism.

MD

Positions of the ICC

World Revolution is the section in Britain of the International Communist Council.

This section traces its origins in the successive contributions of the Communist League, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd International, and the left fractions which detached themselves from the Left Wing of the German and Italian Left.

Today the ICC defends the following basic positions, fundamental lessons of the historic struggle of the working class:

• Since World War I, capitalism has been a decadent social system which has nothing to offer the working class and humanity as a whole except cycles of crises, wars and reconstructions. Its internal contradictions, deepening every day, are alternative for humanity: socialism or barbarism.

• The working class is the only class capable of carrying out the communist revolution against capitalism.

• The revolutionary struggle of the proletariat must inevitably lead the working class to a confrontation with the capitalist state. In doing so, the working class will have to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale.

• The form of this dictatorship is the inter-

national power of the workers' councils.

• Socialism, the mode of social reproduction initiated by the workers' councils is not 'workers' socialism', but the socialist mode of production of the economy'. Socialism requires the conscious abolition by the working class of capitalist social relations, such as wage labour, commodity production, alienation of labour from the means of production, and the destruction of the capitalist state, the construction of a world human community.

• The so-called 'socialist' countries (Russia, the eastern bloc, China, Cuba, etc.) are a particular form of capitalist state, a state that tends towards state capitalism, itself an expression of the decline of capitalism. There are no 'socialist' countries in this plane.

• The working class is the only class capable of carrying out the communist revolution against capitalism.

• The so-called 'workers' parties' (the 'Communist' and 'Socialist' parties as well as their leftist appendages) are the left of capitalism's political apparatus.

• Within the capitalist parliament and elections are nothing but sources of capitalist mystification; any participation in the parliamentary circus can only reinforce this mystification in the eyes of the proletariat.

• Today all factions of the bourgeoisie are basically reactionary. Any tactics which call for 'popular front' or 'united front' between the proletariat and my faction of the bourgeoisie can only serve to derail the struggle of the proletariat and disarm it in the face of the imperialist powers.

• The so-called 'national liberation struggles' are moments in the deadly struggle between imperialist powers large and small to gain control over the world market. The slogan of 'support for national liberation' is a diversion that tends to defend one imperialist power against another under nationalist or 'socialist' verbiage.

• The role of the working class organisation is not to 'organise the working class' nor to 'take power' on behalf of the workers' but to participate actively in the generalisation of proletarian revolution and revolutionary consciousness within the proletariat.

ACTIVITY OF THE ICC

The vital theoretical elaboration demanded by the re-awakening of the proletarian struggle after fifty years of counter-revolution, in the last years of the eighties, has been on an international scale, in the struggles of the proletariat, in order to contribute to the process which leads to the self-organisation and revolutionary action of the working class.

INFLATION: A PRODUCT OF CAPITAL'S DECLINE, NOT OF WORKERS' MILITANCY

For an economy that's supposedly "stronger than any time since the 1950s" British capitalism is in deep trouble. The latest economic figures, the continual tampering with the unemployment figures, Nigel Lawson is now suggesting that the retail price index is "pervasive" to include mortgage payments, and the official inflation figure responsible for the "temporary blip" that has brought the official inflation figure to 5.7%, the highest since 1985, from a perspective of at least 7% for the year as a whole.

Talk of "overheating" economy which has an "underlying strength" also appears rather empty in the face of the world's worst trade deficit. Last year's current account deficit was £24 billion, London's budget projection for this year is £30 billion, and the latest estimate is already nearly £8 billion, and the most recent revised estimates are between £12 and £15 billion for the whole year.

And as for the productivity figures, despite some gains over the last four years, even if it was possible to sustain them it would, according to the latest figures, leave Britain still well behind with productivity levels in Germany, 8 to catch up with France, more than 20 to catch up with Japan and probably catch up with the US.

The official consequences of the "blip" in the "strong" economy are explained by the government's Thatcher, for example, says that people should save more, which is just what the Office of Fair Trading admits there are more than two million who "have more than they can afford to repay, and one in ten 'concerned' facing problems with debts." But more important is the way the ruling class tries to link the rise in prices with the rise in wages. As Norman Fowler says of inflation and, as Norman Fowler put it, the inflation figures "should not be used as an excuse for increasing wages."

It shows the bourgeoisie says the working class is the cause of inflation and must therefore suffer the consequences of it. What follows is an extract from the *Workers' Struggles* article published in *W2*, which goes into the real causes and significance of inflation. It is particularly appropriate as there is no time to show how "the greatest burst of inflation in the post-war period corresponded to its most serious recession" that of 1971, while now, in the wake of the miners' strike, inflation is again on the rise. The greater inflation (in the late 70s) the perspective is once again toward an expression of the crisis of capitalism with its accompanying misery. Much has happened in the subsequent 15 years, but, at the level of the economy, the crisis has worsened as anticipated, and the class struggle perspective of the miners' strike has been more widespread than at any time in the history of the workers' movement. Inflation, as the miners' strike has shown, is not just an economy, but a fundamental symptom of capitalism's insoluble crisis.

THE FAILURE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST INFLATION

As we have seen, the fundamental causes of inflation reside in the contemporary mode of production of the capitalist system which is manifested by an inordinate development of unproductive expenditure. In this sense, there should not be an effective struggle against inflation.

Inflation is fundamental to the development of the epoch of capitalism and that it manifests itself most sharply in periods of war (1914-18, 1939-45, Korea, Vietnam, the Cuban and Algerian wars...) i.e., at times when unproductive expenditure is at its highest. It is thus logical to consider that it is by beginning with the specific characteristics of the bourgeoisie, the role of armaments production and unproductive expenditure in general in the economy, that we can understand the causes of inflation.

The decadence of capitalism is caused by the growing and more and more insurmountable difficulties which the system encounters in finding outlets for its surplus production. At the same time, these difficulties provoke a constant increase in unproductive expenditure dedicated to the maintenance of a system which is historically condemned to death.

- expenditure on armaments which allow the state to defend tooth and nail the position of the national capital against rival capitals - expenditure on the state apparatus which, faced with the difficulties of the system, is forced to exert a Moloch-like domination over the whole of social life (police, administra-

tion, judiciary) - expenditure on marketing, advertising, more and more spherical, costs which are all concentrated in the marketing of commodities and not their production.

The increase in unproductive expenditure in capitalist society is not in itself a novelty, it is a fact of all societies and especially socialist ones. The difference is that in capitalist society the unproductive expenditure, under feuilleuses, for example, where the nobility consumed the greater part of the social surplus product in the form of luxury goods. It manifested itself in the consumption of the capitalist class, in the consumption of the ruling class and of the decline of capitalism, as with the decline of other systems, is the magnitude of these expenditures in relation to productive activities.

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In other words, inflation expresses the increasing waste of productive forces which the working class is the cause of inflation and must therefore suffer the consequences of it. What follows is an extract from the *Workers' Struggles* article published in *W2*, which goes into the real causes and significance of inflation. It is particularly appropriate as there is no time to show how "the greatest burst of inflation in the post-war period corresponded to its most serious recession" that of 1971, while now, in the wake of the miners' strike, inflation is again on the rise. The greater inflation (in the late 70s) the perspective is once again toward an expression of the crisis of capitalism with its accompanying misery. Much has happened in the subsequent 15 years, but, at the level of the economy, the crisis has worsened as anticipated, and the class struggle perspective of the miners' strike has been more widespread than at any time in the history of the workers' movement. Inflation, as the miners' strike has shown, is not just an economy, but a fundamental symptom of capital-

ism's insoluble crisis.

Since this article was written we have had the

wave of struggles which culminated in the mass strike in Poland. In this article and current events, we can see that has been underway since mid 1983. Broadly speaking the last five years have been characterised by the increasingly frontal struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie, cuts in the social wage, productivity pushes etc) and the growing scale of workers' struggles. The perspective opening up is that when the working class attacks the development of inflation. Fifteen years ago the ruling class could indeed "fearstate" in imposing draconian measures on the working class which the situation demands"; now, alongside budgetary economies

- putting brakes on demand by limiting credit or reducing real incomes

- wage restrictions.

Budgetary economies are attempts to deal with the fundamental causes of inflation. In fact, to the extent that they are implemented, they will not be enough to prevent the existence of deficits of dozens of billions of dollars in the last two years, deficits which, to the extent that they are covered by the issue of bank notes, is the injection into the economy of a mass of

currency which does not correspond to the crea-

tion of real value, are manifested in a fall in

the value of money and a corresponding rise in

inflation.

In general, to the extent that purchases by

the state constitute one of the markets for cap-

ital, and that due to the nature of capital construction, these restrictions have had the effect of accentuating today's recession. Governments of all kinds, from the most liberal to the most repressive, without really being able to prevent by resorting to the other.

Policies of limiting credits, in so far as they

are aimed at reducing

the amount

of saving off invested capital, costs which have

repercussions on the prices of commodities and

lead to more inflation.

As for the wage restrictions, these have now be-

come the background for a well-worn scenario:

prices do not move as long as they are subject to

restrictions

the opportunity arises to use speculative bonds,

bonds which are simplified by the fact that many

debtors, having awaited the end of restrictions

in order to increase their debt, are then faced

with an imbalance between supply and demand ben-

eficial to the latter. For from holding down in-

flation by

strikes and stops for a continuous infla-

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Thus these restrictions do not have the

desired effect but, to the extent that the system

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LAND: GOVERNMENT & OPPPOSITION AGAINST THE WORKERS

The workers of Poland, in response to wage and brutally sudden price rises and their biggest wave of struggles came the mass strike of August 1980. Spontaneous strikes in the mines, the metal industry, the electricals, right through to Silesia it went, to the transport workers of Szczecin, to the workers of Gdansk, the steel and tractor works of Warsaw, to Cracow, Lublin, Poznan and

wave, coming so shortly after the May, is a clear demonstration of the combativity of the world proletariat. After the stinging defeat the Polish workers in 1981, they are once again themselves into battle against a vicious example of a capitalist sis.

Former KOR:
"Only a government society could stop the for austerity in 1981. What's really at stake is the constitution (interview with the May 1988).

...in contrast to the strikes of 1907 which was brought to an end quite quickly, it didn't involve the like of the workers; it didn't give rise to or bring out of struggle like the NWS (strike committee); and it didn't lead to any kind of conclusion from the ruling class. ... for this is not a strike of the workers, it is a strike of the bourgeoisie, it is a strike of the bourgeois. It is the bourgeoisie that is pushing backwards either in Poland or Italy. It is that while in 1911 the bourgeoisie was poorly equipped to expand, over the last 8 years it has been well equipped to expand the workers' struggle - above all its trade union, Solidarnosc.

extract from the forthcoming *International Review* shows exactly what the "opposition" worked hand in hand with the resistance.

The are now up against very similar workers in the west - in the trap of "rank and file" unionism, as well as against, contradicting them, the importance of the struggle in democracies as a means of struggle being laid for the workers in the

conditions, their reason just jokes.

"radical" president of course, and the reestablishment of Socialism.

Solidarnosc launches a very selective campaign, many workers places of exposure for a start to

lid on the workers' struggle or to be arrested, to call for

that the government was surprised at the extent of the strike throughout the period they lasted and had learned a great deal since the first and second strikes about the situation. Each time a new strike on took care to end it as a "cordon" (special and effective) so that workers and their families and the workers in prison entering into contact with their families were not able to do so, forming a single battlefield. If intimidation weren't limited to August, the strike would have continued. The interior minister general, appeared in uniform on TV to announce measures aimed at ending the strike, but he was not in the most high by the strikes; Katowice, authorities unleashed all the they obviously avoided the direct call for a strike. The strike had been a symbol for Katowice, was also present in the strike, but when it was planted, notably because of this, it would be a symbolic value, since the workers would have to initially initiate the strike. Furthermore, to facilitate this return to work, the government which had called for negotiations

did not remain purely verbal. Backed up by actions: Silesia was cut off from the rest of the country by army and police barriers; zones of intervention in new enterprises were imposed; the workers (notably in Silesia and Lower Silesia) were prohibited from leaving the mines; the miners lacked food, blankets; arrests multiplied. Strikers but also members of the opposition, in particular leaders of Solidarnosc, the head of the union in Frasyniuk, were arrested.

union pluralism.' Even the forces of the official power made play of their 'disagreements' in order to disorient the workers. Thus on 24 August, the official unions (OPZZ), whose president is a member of the political bureau of the Party, warned the government that it must 'listen to their opinion' on the threat of calling a general strike. Jaruzelski must have been really scared.

Finally, thanks to these manoeuvres, the bourgeoisie got what it wanted: a return to the pre-war situation. The strike of 1936 was an important defeat for the workers which will leave its mark. It's all the more a defeat in that the sabotaging work of Solidarnosc, which has been going on for a long time, has left its mark on Walesa, who's always ready for this kind of job, to appear as the one who "sold out the strike". His popularity will no doubt have lost a lot of its former strength, but he will still be without breaking eggs! The essential thing is that the majority of workers still have their illusions in "free" trade unions. By refusing to accept the leadership of Solidarnosc, Solidarnosc is already well-established, with numerous local branches, collection of dues, regular meetings of its leaders - all that is "tolerated", by continuing to "persecute" its leaders, the official unions will make its own contribution to these illusions.

Capitalism can't make peace

Under the gaze of a few bemused cows, a handful of nuclear disarmers, and dozens of reporters and TV cameramen, the first of a series of 100 nuclear bombs was dismantled to be returned to Arizona, USA. Was this a 'milestone for arms control' as Britain's defence secretary George Younger said, or 'truly momentous' as US president Jimmy Carter said? Does the east-west agreement on the reduction of Euromissiles, coming at the same time as the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, Russian troops from Afghanistan, Cuban troops from Angola, and Vietnamese troops from Cambodia, mean that the world is becoming a safer place, or that east-west relations are getting better all the time?

Not a bit of it. All these 'peace treaties' are nothing but part of the preparation for future wars. The nuclear warheads from the easily targetable Molesworth and Greenwich Common US airbases will be recycled into more efficient delivery systems and placed in less easily targetable warplanes and submarines. The ending of the Gulf war and the withdrawal of eastern bloc troops from various combat-zones simply demon-

strategic, the continuing success of the US/NATO strategy of 'forward defence', in the strangulation of Russia's southern flank. The US is on its knees and can now be restored to its role as the US's sentinel on Russia's southern flank. The eastern bloc is withdrawing its troops from other theatres of conflict, and the US is now unopposed by the western bloc's military offensive. It is being forced to adopt a policy of 'defensive defence', which means that it is as 'unthreatening' as a 'caged-up cobra' that has been forced into a corner.

Neither do these treaties bring any relief to the killing-fields themselves. In Afghanistan, the second city, Kandahar, has been cut off from

the world has continued fighting. In the Gulf the cessation has permitted the Israeli and Kurdish forces to expand. In Central America, population growth in Angola, the UNITA forces have begun a new offensive. The world isn't becoming a safer place. On the contrary, the desperate situation of the Russian gulf makes the threat of world war more and more tangible.

tudes of bourgeois statesmen, and neither is peace a gift from well-meaning and hard-working diplomats. Periods of war or peace are determined not by the will of individuals but by the underlying necessities of the economic system. A social system dominated by blind economic law and by the merciless requirements of competition, capitalism has always given birth to wars. But the greater the extent, and intensity, of war under capitalism have added impetus to the historical evolution of the system's economic foundations.

capitalist system came to the surface again, the tensions between the two blocs also came out into the open. And just as the crisis is accelerating beyond the control of the bourgeoisie, so the retarding drive towards world war is an inexorable process which cannot be halted by the 'wisest' of bourgeois statesmen.

**CAPITALISM IS ON A COURSE TOWARDS SUICIDE; ONLY
THE WORKERS STAND IN THE WAY**

The world system is still a rational system, even its own terms; and that the bourgeoisie can control the slide towards war. Again history demonstrates that war in this century has made less and less economic sense to the protagonists, but it has more and more resulted in the mutual destruction of all the states who took part in it. And also demonstrates that once the plunge towards cold war has gone past a certain point, nothing will stop the bourgeoisie from using all

In sum, this argument - even when it's echoed in IR - destructive power at its disposal. (2)

evolutionaries who have swallowed capital-
ism(2) - is just a variant of the pacifist
war can be averted by good sense and
good will. In fact it is now being consciously
systematically used by the ruling class to
lead the world into war. The struggle of the world
is, and in particular the working
class, to the several classes of society
to submit to the economic pauperisation
deological intoxication required to no-
tice the present phase within the decline of
the military bases for the next holoc-
ocaust, the ecological crisis that has
brought the struggle of an undefeated
class, the preventing capitalism's final
rise into barbarism. The working
class, by raising itself to the level
revolution, can deliver humanity from the
catastrophe that is now in progress.

ES
For a deeper analysis of the irrationality in this era, see 'War, Militarism and thealist Blocs' in International Review 52 and
See the polemic with Battaglia Comunista

World capital is responsible for massacre in Kurdistan

hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie's current blather about 'peace' is nowhere more clearly and more graphically exposed than in the attitude of the Kurds, like Iren, who is supposed to have laid down arms in the gulf aristocratic begin July 25. The Kurdish leaders in the oil-rich provinces of the Middle East have reduced their arms purchases since the announcement of the peace plan. The Kurds in Turkey, however, have a massive armed force, which they are using to impose their will on the Kurdish population.

ensive against the southern borders. The

ies. 80% of them were women and children.

BLATANT HYPOCRISY OF THE BOURGEOISIE

The Kurdish population has truly been a victim of the unbounded cynicism of a combination of imperialist powers large and small. But this doesn't alter the fact that the goal of self-government, independence, or national liberation sought by the Kurdish people is not an illusion but a rallying call to massacre today.

In order to seek backing for their cause the Kurdish nationalists have been obliged to sell their people down the river. They have been forced to make a deal with the US and its allies, and to do this they have had to give up their demands for an independent Kurdish state.

Iran, Iraq, above all, which through Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, encouraged and supported Iraq through its eight years of war with Iran, the aim being to break the resistance of the Iranian people against Khomeini's clerical regime and return him to power. The US, Britain and France are as likely as not being played out. Divisions among the Kurdish parties themselves are also being played out, as well as by existing nationalisms. 'Turkish' Kurds of the so-called Marxist Workers Party of Kurdistan, (KDP) in the Kurdish regime since 1982, are in fact in steel cages in Turkey, separated from the wretched 'Iraqi' Kurds fleeing into Turkey. Iraqi Kurdish groups ally themselves with Iran, Iranian Kurds with Turkey, and so on.

story-swollen rampaging military, the West and US have suddenly found their conscience over chemical curse. How timely! This new-found concern for the Kurds' cruel treatment is, of course, pure humbug, an illusory concern for the Kurdish uprising and carnage in the Gulf on a class basis have in practice lifted up this second banner. But it is above all the responsibility of the workers in the imperialist centres to strike a decisive blow against world capitalism's war machine.

LETTERS

COUNTER-INFORMATION

The following letter is a reply to an appeal by the Counter-Information collective for financial aid to publish their publications. We are publishing it here because the conception of revolutionary activity implied in the Counter-Information news bulletin raises political questions that go beyond the particularities of this group.

31.8.88

Dear comrades,

We received your appeal for money to sustain Counter-Information. Although we recognise that the collective interpret the world events from the standpoint of the working class, we can only respond negatively to this appeal.

We are a communist organisation battling to make its voice heard against the enormous din of bourgeois propaganda. We are totally committed to supporting the working class. We ourselves produce papers and journals in 10 countries, a theoretical quarterly in three languages, pamphlets and leaflets. As, unlike the left wing, we do not have a centralised structure, we are kept out of 'alternative' bookshops because of our political positions, we are totally dependent on our members, sympathisers and readers (a minority) to support this effort. As it is we are constantly stretched financially to keep our publications going, that is, as an organisation simple at not having the resources to back your appeal.

But this is not simply a financial question; it is a political question. It is not our task to give financial assistance to other groups without there being any political relationship that enables us to see whether we are really engaged in the same project. We are not the worldwide communist revolution and for the regroupment of revolutionary forces on a world scale. The ICO has helped groups to come together, but has not called on contributions to produce leaflets and papers, but this was always the result of a long political discussion, and not a political decision.

In the case of Counter-Information, it is very clear even from looking at its form that we have a totally different conception of the tasks of revolutionaries. It is not a bulletin of information, it is a bulletin of information in its

APPEAL TO READERS

Instead of just buying individual copies of *World Revolution* - take out a **SUBSCRIPTION**. This is a vital means of receiving money regularly, as well as for readers to guarantee getting *WR* as well as *Post Office*. If you are not in a position of giving more, take out a **SUPPORTERS' SUBSCRIPTION** for £20, either now or when renewing an existing subscription. At the top of this article are heavily tinged with leftist or rank and file unionist influences. But perhaps even more important, *WR* entirely avoids the issue of the need for revolutionaries to work towards the building of an organisation of revolutionaries based on a rigorous framework to develop a revolutionary press which does not limit itself to merely observing or reporting on social events, but which aims to promote a clear political orientation to the workers' struggle.

The councilist-libertarian approach of *WR* can also be seen in the very fact that you give it away free; this seems to be a negative reaction to the leftist organisations who sell the working class political papers in itself devoid of any political commitment on the part of the sellers. But a proletarian organisation that sees its work in a long term perspective and underlines the importance of keeping its press alive in the adverse conditions of bourgeois society must recognise that there is an alternative to producing a paper that is for sale in the working class. The political paper of Counter-Information is in this respect a harsh but inevitable reminder of economic reality.

Our insistence on these points is at all times that we have no wish to engage in a political dialogue with you. As you know we wrote to you some time ago suggesting a political discussion on the political programme. We were positive, but we have not heard from you since then, apart from the continuing exchange of publications. We reiterate our willingness to enter into this discussion. We believe that on the fact that we think that the energies you have been putting into Counter-Information would be better spent seriously reflecting on the objectives of revolutionaries in the capitalist world, the acceleration of the crisis and of capitalism's preparations for world war, the international revolution and the class struggle, on how revolutionaries should be responding to this situation. We look forward to your reply.

Fraternally,

For the ICO

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW 54

* Lies about 'disarmament' and 'peace'
* Poland: the obstacle of unionism
* The perspective of revolution
* Understanding the decadence of capitalism (4)
* Evolution of the political milieu (2) 78-83
* Underestimation of the class struggle

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW 55 out soon

* The peace of summer 80
* The miners' strike in Poland
* Crisis and class struggle in Mexico
* Understanding the decadence of capitalism (5)
* Decantation of the proletarian political milieu
* 70 years ago: the revolution in Germany

It's a point of view which implies that if we write in a more simple fashion, used less difficult and complicated language and made the layout more interesting then we would attract more readers. The working class would be greater.

While we must (and do) make a constant effort to make *WR* as readable as possible in order to reach the widest possible readership, it is also the case in the main, that we are going going to develop *WR* as a weapon of intervention in the working class. The question of language and layout is not the most important. Behind the question of clarity of language is the need for political clarity. By this we mean that the working class is the carrier that holds the response to the unfolding of the class struggle, reflecting the immediacy and complexity of this process, and, at the same time, the need to understand the perspective of the class struggle and the perspectives for the working class which flow from it. If we aren't able to do this then no amount of simplicity of language or layout will suffice. We must, for instance, along the lines of being 'on top of the situation' in order to intervene in it that the revolutionary newspaper will develop, and where we do this, it will be clear.

However this doesn't mean we ignore the question of the presentation of our politics or believe it will automatically be understood. The effort is part of the fight to defend a communist point of view in the working class.

But if we treat these questions of presentation as problems in and of themselves, then we can come up with answers that do not fit in with what you suggest that we shouldn't use terms as 'epoch of capitalist decadence', 'imperialist bloc' because they are too difficult or specific for workers to understand. Some organisations it's true that the use of these terms can be inappropriate - for example, in an agitational leaflet calling for workers to spread their struggle and to work for not only principle to use them at every opportunity. But, having said that, we must also insist that the decadence of

capitalism and the division of the world into imperialist blocs are central planks in the marxist conception of the world and the reality of the world. The slogan of revolutionaries is the root of the intervention of revolutionaries. We don't deny that such terms are not communists, but we do believe that the use of that would be to erode the foundations of communist politics and dilute our intervention. You only have to look at the various ephemeral councilist organisations to see that the use of a lot of 'simple' language goes alongside a confused and opportunistic approach to politics. And, of course, leftist politics often try to hide their imperialist politics behind the claim that they are using the 'language of the working class.'

Nevertheless we agree with you that it's possible to be clear and simple and direct

as you point to with the article on the Post Office. It's also right to insist that articles on the 'scene' (otherwise known as the news) should be written in a way that is related to the needs of revolutionary intervention in the class struggle. Although we think the article on the Communist Workers Organisation in WRI did so, it is also important to understand the politics of the present period and the development of the class struggle.

In spite of such an effort to be as readable as possible the language of revolutionary politics will remain difficult for the majority of the working class before a revolutionary situation develops in which concepts like the 'decadence of capitalism' will enter the consciousness of ordinary language. Today many workers still have illusions in bourgeois democracy, the trade unions, the state, the capitalist system, etc. etc. Many are still interested in 'opportunities' (while still reflecting on the evolution of events). Such workers may read this paper and get the words like 'decadence' and 'imperialist bloc' and extend the language and throw it away in irritation. Here it's not the fault of the words themselves, which are a direct reflection of the marxist vision of the world and the needs of the working class. The majority of the working class to assimilate them, hemmed in either by illusions in the present system or a distrust of all politics. In fact the present situation of the working class is like a 'lull'. The influence of current and future class battles will awaken in more and more workers, the desire for a marxist clarity concerning the struggle they are involved in. Revolutionaries must prepare to meet this need today, not by abandoning difficult but essential concepts - which would be pandering to the superficiality of politics, but by learning how to cut the true marxist ideas into the unfolding of events. This is the essential responsibility of the revolutionary newspaper.

WR'S LANGUAGE

Dear World Revolution,

... The major point, and no doubt you have heard this before, is the type of language that the paper uses.

For instance, the first two paragraphs of the 'lead' article in issue number 116 are clear enough, but then in the third paragraph the writer uses such phrases as 'the epoch of capitalist decadence', 'imperialist bloc' etc. Now I know what this means, but if the readers have got through your paper, they still won't be clear on the meaning of it. The use of this 'elegant' type of writing presents problems - some ideas etc can only be described in such a manner, but others don't.

A second point is the page seven 'scene' report (in this case the CNO meeting) - I find it interesting, but it's quite simply irrelevant to any of us who are not members of the CNO. The defined linking of why the different theoretical outlooks affect the class struggle - as for instance was done with the DAM/rank and file article in issue 116 part 2.

The two pieces on the textile strike and the seamen's strike were quite clear and to the point - I wonder about the meaning the struggle is on the side of the P&O piece, and the linking-up of all workers in struggle? at the end of the article says the same thing, but in a more understated way.

The other thing that I feel about the paper is the layout is dull indeed! At least the columns are square, and the headlines readable, but it is still a huge bore to read. I think you have to be interested in thinking of making the effort to read it. Anyway, I know it's hard to say both what needs to be said whilst making it 'readable' and 'short' enough ...

Thank you for your letter. Such comments are important to us, as we want to have a newspaper which is of the working class, as well as for the working class.

No, we were not the first to criticise the language *WR* is written in or the dullness of its layout. This has been said many times before.

Monthly paper in Britain
of the
International
Communist Current

No 164 May 1993

World Revolution

40p

Massacres in Bosnia They intervene, not to protect the innocent, but to protect their imperialist interests

Srebrenica: after months of Serbian siege, 2,000 dead from disease, starvation and shells. The threat of even bigger bloodbaths hangs over the population as the Serb forces move in for a massive ethnic cleansing.

Vice

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countries start going along with the US, and get Germany. It probably needs a new kind of imperialist war to make it work. The US has to pretend to be ultra-cautious about sending German troops to intervene across its borders and commandeer air and column space to the great debate on what to do: tougher sanctions against Serbia, or British and American troops (Lord Owen's armada) or US troops (Paddy Ashdown). In the US, the issue isn't over whether to intervene, but when, and in who's name. But however many divisions there are to go about intervening, their deep humanitarian concern for the suffering population of Bosnia. But who are these great humanitarians, these good people who care about the loss of innocent lives? Are they not the same individuals, parties, media and governments who cheered 'our boys' in 1991, when the US and British armed forces unleashed a real holocaust in the Gulf, wiping out more people in the space of a few weeks than

is needed to sustain its rivals? Are they not the same individuals, parties, media and governments who cheered 'our boys' in 1991, when the US and British armed forces unleashed a real holocaust in the Gulf, wiping out more people in the space of a few weeks than

Continued on page 4

INDIA 3 RUPEES/IRELAND 45¢/ITALY 1500 LIRE/JAPAN 200 YEN/USA 60¢

Workers need to struggle: unions try to split us up

Faced with a continuing barrage of attacks on its living standards, sustained unemployment at massive levels and not a shred of evidence for the supposed economic recovery, the working class is showing a growing anger and impatience that the leadership of unions struggles to contain. A Nalgo speaker at a rally in Leeds on April 2 said: "this government has attacked all workers at the same time, something Mrs Thatcher was never able to do. I was positive to try to prevent the government from taking the attack of the eighties because of the level of the economic crisis. In the nineties there is no alternative for the bourgeoisie but to try and make the working class pay for the crisis. The working class is not to blame for this crisis at the same time. It is because of this that there is such a potential for a unified response by the working class. It is also the case for unions to wheel out their repertoire of divisive actions."

Unions divide the struggle. Take the two big strike days of April 2 and 16, involving miners, railworkers, busworkers and workers in the public sector. On the surface, they look like strikes on the same day given the importance of the miners' wage to organise a class-wide fight against unemployment and the effects of the crisis. But in fact the unions made sure that the demonstrations held on these days were not publicised and dispersed, in contrast to last October. The miners' demonstrations acted as such a focus for workers throughout the country.

Subsequently, ASLEF and the NUM continue to divert the struggle against pit closures into a campaign of public support that does nothing to defend their jobs. The miners know that 19 of these threatened pits are still to be closed and the other 12 could go within a year. Meanwhile on April 2 Arthur Scargill will rally in Barnsley that "we will achieve the objective of ... to focus attention on the disgraceful behaviour of this government in closing down the coal mines." In reality, seeking "public support" is a sure-fire way to distract workers while the miners really need: mass solidarity from other workers.

Then there's the example of the firefighters. For the last 17 years their pay has been linked to the average earnings of industrial workers. Through strikes workers have fought to defend their pay and conditions. Does it matter what the underlying motives are?

Which we can only reply that the deployment of thousands of firefighters to defend the 30,000 US troops in Somalia by its rivals did the strikers no good at all. And so did the deployment of thousands of US troops in Somalia by its rivals.

More massive military interventions, through air strikes or the use of commando troops, would in all probability only extend the miners' strike. And if it did, in the short term, and at considerable cost, military intervention did bring about a cease-fire, it is crucial to understand that the interventionists were pounds to the Serbs' ounce.

Today they are turned on their former pawn, it's not because they've suddenly discovered a con-

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Workers have

"And so the world appears as a huge free-for-all, where behind the fine speeches about the 'world order', international 'peace' and the like, the empires, the 'rich' and 'poor' for the poor, every nation is in fact out for itself; where sharpening imperialist rivalries find expression not just in economic competition, but in war" (Manifesto of the 9th Congress of the ICC).

Faced with the increasing inter-ethnic slaug-

hers around the world, from ex-Yugoslavia, through the Caucasus, to the ex-Soviet republics of Central Asia; faced with the machinations and moves towards independence from the major powers; faced with the threat of the whole planet sliding more and more into war and destruction, it is more vital than ever for the working class to assert its independence and its own interests against increasingly irrational nations and imperialist interests of all kinds.

Workers must oppose all 'national' wars. Last century, in the context of the expansion and development of capitalism - and thus of the working class' proletarian internationalist support - for the construction of new nation states and against the forces of reaction, eg the struggle for Italian unification and the American Civil War. But unlike the last century, workers in the period of declining capitalism have to oppose **all** national struggles. In a world that has

been carved up by the great imperialist powers, "the nation is but a cloud that covers the earth" and "imperialist rivalries are the last ideological measure with which the masses can be persuaded to play the role of cannon fodder in imperialist war" (Rosa Luxemburg, The Junius Pamphlet, 1915).

If this was true of imperialism plunged into its permanent epoch of crisis and war at the beginning of the century, it's even more true today as the system rolls on its feet.

We can see this by observing the effects of capitalism's decomposition on the "new" nations of the '60s and '70s, as they descend the "new imperialist spiral" so fervently supported by the left, by the Stalinists and particularly the Trotskyists. Throughout Africa, these "young" capitalisms, far from providing a basis for the expansion of the world economy, form an alternative economy of war, disease, starvation and ecological degradation.

Far from being a factor of economic unification, these countries are disintegrating into less and less viable units. From the beginning of the century, the number of nation states has gone from around 50 to over 100. In the wake of the USSR and its satellite regimes threaten to add many more new states. The consequences are evident: more armaments; more countries falling under the reign of armed gangs; more fighting over more and more ridiculous frontiers - at a time when the problems facing humanity can only be tackled by breaking down frontiers and creating a global community.

All states are imperialist. This explosion of nationalistic tendencies, even from the smallest "statelet", in no way calls into

Warsaw 1943, Bosnia 1993:

The grand alibis of democracy

Fifty years ago, in April 1943, the last inhabitants of the Warsaw Ghetto staged a revolt against the Nazi army of occupation. Nearly 400,000 Jews had already either been carted off to the death camps or had perished from starvation and disease. But when the German army entered the ghetto, they were not there to kill them off. They were met with furious resistance as a thousand young Jews fought with Molotov cocktails and pistols to defend a further 60,000 old people and children hidden in basements and cellars. They were driven back by the defenders, the Nazi High Command ordered the ghetto to be razed to the ground.

The bourgeoisie and its media communicate this heroic, if tragic, rebellion in its own way, paying tribute to the martyrs. The Jewish state presents itself as the ghetto of the Middle East, holding out against overwhelming odds. In this self-portrait, Israel's brutal treatment of the Palestinian masses is in the struggle of an oppressed minority fighting to defend itself. On the extreme left, the revolt is held up as a model of real, popular anti-fascism, even as a symbol of internationalism (Socialist Worker, 17 April). In fact, the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, like the uprising of 1944, took place in conditions where there was no longer any basis for a proletarian, and thus a real internationalist response to the imperialist war. Rather it was a last stand of a population in its back to the wall, and as such it could not escape the logic of nationalism and the anti-fascist resistance.

But the main message being sold in the recent commemorations of the revolt is the concern that indifference of the 'democratic' Allies to the fate of European Jewry. Clear parallels are drawn between this and the attitude of the 'West' to the slaughter in ex-Yugoslavia. In an article in the Guardian on 19.4.93, the editor of the paper of the communists led the uprising, Mark Edelman, is quoted as saying "What is going on in Yugoslavia is Hitler's victory from beyond the grave. And the Western countries, beyond their words/declarations, are doing the same thing as they did before".

Such articles and exposés don't conceal the truth: the Allies did perfectly well out of the existence of the death camp, and chose to do nothing about them. For example, proposals to bomb the railways leading to the camps were turned down. In the Balkans, most of the great democratic hammerblows were due to the flood of Jewish refugees before, during and after the war. In one notorious case, an offer by the Nazis in Rumania to swap one million Jews for a fleet of trucks was summarily rejected. As the US general who accepted it, asked: "What would we do with a million Jews?"

But what the bourgeoisie press is less willing to tell us is that although the Allies kept silent about the holocaust for most of the time of the war, they publicised it to the world at the end of the war. The reason for this is that the war crimes of Nazism provided the perfect alibi for the war crimes of the Allies. The US and its allies participated in massacres at the end of the war. The terror bombing of German cities - including Dresden which demonstrably had no military installations at all - was cynically aimed at crushing the German working class and stifling any hope of a revolution in the ruins of the defeated powers, as had happened at the end of World War One. To hide the blood that smelt their counter-revolutionary hands, the democrats had to do to the piles of dead in Auschwitz and Treblinka what the entire German people for the degradations of the German ruling class, and justifying their own holocaust against the proletariat of Germany, had not done.

And today, the complaints about the indifference of the democracies in World War Two, the calls to learn the lessons of the Warsaw uprising and the massacre of the genocide going on in the Balkans, serve an entirely different end: to justify the moves towards an intervention in this region by the 'democratic' imperialisms. Once again, the victims of imperialist war suffer a double massacre: after being maimed by one side in the cartridge, their very deaths are used to whitewash even greater massacres. CDW

They intervene, not to protect the innocent, but to protect their imperialist interests

collapse of society which only drag humanity increasingly bloody wars. The only force countering this descent into self-destruction is the class struggle of the proletariat. The more workers fight for their demands and living conditions, the harder it is for the bourgeoisie to mobilise society for war. The more workers in all countries recognise their common interests and struggle together, the harder it is for the bourgeoisie to drag them off to the battle fronts in the defence of the fatherland. This was proved positively in 1917-18 when it was workers in Russia who stopped the revolutionary uprisings that brought the world war to an abrupt end. It is proved negatively in ex-Yugoslavia today. A few years ago, Serbian, Croatian and Muslim workers in the former state were defending side by side against the attacks of the Yugoslav capitalist state. Today they have been dragged onto the terrain of their enemy, the terrorist forces of the bourgeoisie, and are fighting in their thousands. Falling for the phonry unity of nation, religion or ethnic group has been a catastrophe for the working class in this region.

This struggle is as a warning to the workers in the central capitalist countries. If we swallow the 'humanitarian' excuses of our exploiters, if we let them persuade us that there is a conflict between our class and the capitalist class, and the capitalist state, if we are fooled into supporting the military expeditions of the ruling class, we will be signing our own death warrants in the long run. We must stand together, with a bound hand and foot, to the capitalist war machine.

The working class of the western European countries cannot be indifferent to the horrors being perpetrated in ex-Yugoslavia, not least because they provide a glimpse of what capitalism will do to the whole planet if it is not destroyed. But to defend the progressive appeals of our class enemy, we have to affirm that the only way to stop the descent into military barbarism is to increase the class divide in all countries, to increase the gap between the capitalist state and its agents. The more the proletariat fights for its own interests at the very heart of the capitalist world order, the more hope there is of preventing the extension of exploitation to those workers in the peripheral areas who are at present caught up in the wheels of nationalism, ethnocentrism and war. But above all, by drawing up the battle line of the class of workers in the central countries can begin to raise the banner of revolution, the banner of a new society, free forever from the criminal absurdity of national frontiers and fratricidal wars. *WR 24.4.93*

Public Meetings:

Only the class struggle can put an end to wars and barbarism

**Exeter: 29th May 2.30pm
St Georges Hall, Market St.**

**London: 15th May 2.30pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (Holborn Tube)**
An open meeting will also be held on the 19th June at the same address at 2.30 pm

**Manchester: 12th June,
Details to be advertised in "Front Line" bookshop**

French elections: the Right carries on the Left's dirty work

The recent elections in France saw the defeat of the 'Socialists' Party after a decade in power and the triumphant return of the right to government. This has been described as a 'historical turning point' in the development of France.

But what does this so-called change actually mean for the population and, above all, for the working class?

The restoration of the Balladur government is in fact exactly the same as its predecessor - Mauroy, Fabius, Rocard and Cresson (all 'Socialist' prime ministers). The new government will continue to develop the same anti-working class policy carried out by the 'Socialists' for over 10 years.

This policy is not specific to this or that party or government. It is dictated by the needs of the national capital. In France, as with every other country, the policy of draconian austerity is the only alternative for the bourgeoisie, regardless of the party in power.

Arguing that it needs to reconstruct an economy which the left's 'bad management' had plunged into chaos, the new government aims at:

- reducing the state budget deficit which will take the form of unprecedented attacks on jobs and wages in the public sector;

- reducing the huge deficit of the Security Service, which has a major impact on health care, which has already suffered enormously under the Socialist government;

- reducing pension and unemployment benefit.

Yet again it's the working class that's going to foot the bill: with tax rises, a wage freeze and increased exploitation for the workers who are 'lucky' enough to still have a job. And as for the perspective of a return to growth in the economy that's been promised by the new elected government, on the grounds that 'new and austere' package creates unemployment, it's a rotten lie. The sacrifice that they are asking workers to accept today are only starters compared to the ones in 1982. Welfare state workers have no incentive to go to any national capital out of the abyss of the world recession.

Today the 'Socialists' are presenting themselves as genuine defenders of 'real democracy', wailing about the right parties being in power and saying that they represent a threat to the 'humanitarian' social gains painstakingly fought for by the left.

Workers everywhere should never forget what the so-called Socialists did when they were at the head of French government:

- hundreds of thousands of lay-offs in the private sector and tens of thousands in the public sector;

- dramatic increases in the cost of healthcare while decreasing and in some case stopping redundancy money for an ever growing mass of homeless in the very heart of the big cities.

It is thanks to these zealous defenders of 'democracy' and 'real democracy' that we saw the active participation of the military apparatus of French imperialism in the gruesome 'Desert Storm' operation which left 300,000 dead and over 10 million people population of Iraq and Kuwait terror.

This is all without mentioning the whole series of military interventions in Chad, Zaire, Rwanda, Somalia or ex-Yugoslavia, all equally in the name of 'humanitarian aid' to victims of barbarous governments.

These 'Socialists' have nothing to learn from any right wing party. The true nature of the left is no different from any other part of capitalism's political apparatus in its ruthless domination over society, an ever increasing misery, terror, and exploitation.

Workers must remember that it is only through their own methods of struggle that they will be able to defend the class interests. In the coming period, with the intensification of class struggle, they can move and more expect to find left factions of the bourgeoisie pretending to be in opposition to right wing government teams. The right is not the only ones fighting the Party left, meanwhile, has an important job in the sabotage of workers' struggles from within. *MK*

The Nadir of Western Democracy?

continued from facing page
in every country's press shows that the ruling class does not feel under threat.

The Capitalist Alibi

In the first place the collapse of the Soviet Union has removed a military menace (at least in the short term) which disciplined the Western states into accepting US leadership without question. Today the crisis is beginning to break. Wherever it is it is automatically for a Western alliance to rally around the US in the Cold War. Today each nation is beginning to seek its own independent salvation. This is the reason for all the haggling over a new GATT deal and why most of the US press is so giddy. It is distinctly uncomfortable about US policies in Bosnia and Iraq. The old certainties of the Cold War have been replaced by a new uncertainty. Every state is re-thinking what is in its best interests in the present period of crisis and realignment. This hesitation is another source of obvious weakness of the West.

The Working Class Lives!

This brings us to the third factor — the retreat of the working class in the last decade. Although the ruling class in every country appears to be divided and squabbling the one certain factor to unite them would be the threat of a major working class struggle. And the fact that the workers have taken all the blame for the last decade's relatively mild further explains why the bosses are now beginning to wash their dirty linens in public. However such an exercise is fraught with danger. As Trotsky once noted the three factors necessary for a successful revolutionary fight are:

1. An economic crisis which hits the living standards of the working class.
2. A serious split in the ruling class and
3. A combative and conscious working class regrouped around a revolutionary party.

Under present conditions only the first factor is missing. After years of retreat however the signs are that the working class is coming to the end of its tether. There is a new willingness to fight even in the most hopeless of struggles. At the moment the resistance is piecemeal and largely sectional but it could well be that the working class will be prepared for this by fighting for a revolutionary consciousness within each of these struggles. A real task of every communist in the period ahead to focus attention on the real enemy, the capitalist system and not be side-tracked by false campaigns from Labour and the leftists to restore prestige and cleanse its state. Consciousness increases and the life and the outward faces of the mortal crisis of the system. Our consciousness and our self-organisation can finish it off.

KENYA

July 25

SOMALIA:

UN Death Squads in Mogadishu

When the US marines went into Somalia last December, Western propaganda claimed that this was a move to disarm the warring factions and promote peace in this desperate part of the world. Yet it so called "Operation Restore Hope" at the time was mainly a military operation against the outgoing President Bush. It also had the more serious function to warn the whole world that America has the capacity to strike anywhere, like the recent bombing of Libya. The unannounced message is that you don't mess with the US. The hypocrisy of Western intervention is only too evident as just like Bosnia, Iraq and a dozen other places, the crisis in Somalia is a result of US policy and intervention. During the Cold War Somalia received substantial funds and arms. Originally these came from the USSR but when the latter started supporting the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia, Somalia and the US became bitter enemies. At the time of the US withdrawal, the US had the Cold Warred, the West no longer had any direct interest in Somalia and withdrew economic support. It is no surprise that the state of Somalia collapsed in 1991. This was followed by the end of the Cold War. Siad Barre's regime collapsed and was succeeded by warlordism. Rival factions of the Somalian ruling class began to fight over more and more resources. The US, which had been supporting the Somalian ruling class, was now seen as a threat. The left, which had been with them in power, was weapons. The economic situation was made worse by famine which was largely caused by the substation of capitalist crop farming for the traditional slash and burn method of the peasants of their previous means of subsistence. With agriculture in ruins the country became increasingly dependent on food aid and the aid agencies were the main prize of the various local ruling classes. We see now the sickening irony of the imperialist policies which have devastated Somalia, appearing to come to its rescue. But in the twisted world of capitalist

ideology appearances are usually false and belie a more sordid reality. The US and subsequent General Aideed in Somalia, but are the result of factions of the ruling class desperate to hold onto their wealth and power in the face of economic collapse. In Somalia the UN is increasingly seen as a tool of US policy and interests representing American and Western interests. (This also explains the absence of a significant UN intervention in Bosnia as the West is divided over who to support).

The calls of the liberal pundits for United Nations free from Western domination is nothing but utopian nonsense. An institution created by imperialists and not by the working-class interests. Workers should not be deluded into expecting the UN to intervene in a neutral manner to protect them from the growing barbarism that characterizes capitalism in its present phase.

The Pakistani soldiers shot by Aideed's troops had no armoured vehicles unlike their British counterparts in Bosnia. The UN is chronically short of funds and the US and other imperialists refuse to pay the dues. Troops of the USSR, which had been supporting the Somalian contingent in Bosnia have been shot because their state has not passed on the proceeds of their war. They have been selling their weapons and equipment. The US, which is fearing the same in Cambodia where Bulgarians have been the main victims of the Khmer Rouge attacks. Contrast this with nations where the US can cut a bit more from the same budget cutting military budgets much more central to its imperialist interests such as blitzing Baghdad. In places like Bosnia where the problems are more difficult to solve than when the US marines were there, it is the US that is to use the often badly trained and equipped UN forces rather than its own army. This is not an insignificant factor given Clinton's preoccupation with reducing the US budget deficit. It is not this budget deficit. This is imperialism in crisis. The real force for peace is the international working class. Disenfranchised and organised as it is at present it alone through its position as the producing class has the power to stop capitalism, driving the world forward to socialism. And this can be done by speeches or leaflets but by united actions, including strikes and demonstrations. The only real insurance against imperialist war is how over a world revolution. It is not this that will bring peace. The CWO joins the International Bureau for the Revolutionary Party and its this perspective that we take into the struggles of the working class wherever we can.

PBD

From the Picket Line

Pickets, Violence and the State

So long as capitalism continues a full class struggle. Class conscious workers recognise that and so do the bosses. When workers start to fight they have to throw off their norms, picket lines, checklists, organisation charts, picket signs, demonstrations, leaflets, tear gas, death squads, 'hit squads' and whatever other weapons of class struggle are available.

Lined up against the workers is the whole armoury which the ruling class keeps on permanent stand-by. This armoury of bourgeois class struggle is the state machine. Every day the ruling class prepares for class struggle just through the Police, the Civil Service, the military, the police, the secret service, the Civil Service and Local Authorities etc. etc.

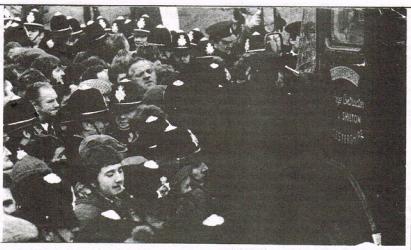
Those workers who attended the Times or Middlebrow mass pickets witnessed the power of the state in class to a monopoly of legal violence. However no one doubts that the police used the usual combination of direct and well-trained physical force backed up by the full legal apparatus to ensure that scabs would be able to enter the factory.

Workers who want to exercise our class power must increase our self-confidence and self-organisation. We must learn to make some resistance to the flying wedge and the snatch squads. Individual workers should avoid where possible any confrontation with cops on picket lines.

Fighting back

When the police attack our pickets we must learn to fight back. Fighting and packing ourselves tightly can provide some resistance to the flying wedge and the snatch squads. Individual workers should avoid where possible any confrontation with cops on picket lines.

KST



Saltley Gates 1974: As the class struggle steps up, mass picketing will not, in itself, be enough to defeat the bosses. Mass solidarity action is the only way to defeat the state.

Evolutionaries and the Unions

2000-01-02

owing article is the text of a comrade from the **SWP** meeting of the **Sheffield Marxist Study Circle**. This is what we were and what we are, which some of our comrades participated alongside of other revolutionary groups. The speech was part to take with **Dave Douglass** of the **SWP** and **John Gandy** of the **CPGB** at **Hilfield Main**. It is pleasant if we could meet in minds but there was what it showed that the anarchist or syndicalist line of the **CPGB** and the **SWP** of their Communism. Let's at their weary arguments **trotskysts' manipulative** made little impact. We that instead of addressing them to our comrades down. This convinced us that we have to make the positions communist! Let more widely we hope this will give thought to those anarchist who attended the debate with responses from any

organisation which is the British internationalist organisation called the Revolutionary Bureau for the Socialist Democracy and the Trades Unionist Congress. This is not an insignificant declaration within this framework that I will be speaking for the Communist Party of Great Britain.

of Unions and the Formation of the working class

never been revolutionary. At the capitalism (and even today in the periphery of capitalism) it seems as though they might be. The brutality with which primitive-ups attacks the first attempts by *organise themselves against capital*

ganise themselves against capital. It's not allowed to hide the fact that they are perfectly compatible with capitalism because they represent one of the best ways for the capitalists to keep the workers in check.

International

850s and 1860s saw the unions as 'socialism' especially as they seemed to mean by which the working class could live independently of all capitalist society. I think this is a central point in our statements today. The history of class is the struggle to break free from domination, to find ways of which didn't depend on some ruling class. The Liberals. This is also why people like Odeon and Cremer were

greatest international revolutionary wave in the history of the working class.

And what role did the unions play in all this? Well in the Russian revolution they were for the most part swept aside because the workers expressed themselves through different, revolutionary organisations such as the factory committees, which were to all intents and purposes later transformed into the unions. In the United States, from the need to strike, strikes became legalised in the 1905 revolution and in 1917 they re-emerged as the form of workers' revolutionary

working class is the task of government. The only role that unions played as unions was to call for strikes against the soviets after October 1917 (e.g. the bank workers and the railway workers union which was led by Mensheviks).

But if there role in Russia was undistinguished

he that there were indeed on trades unionists and trade unionists of the Comintern. It was a powerful force, and it was crypto-fascist Freikorps to massacre the revolutionary workers. It was the German trade associations who presented Rosa Luxemburg from among the 100,000 who were killed in 1918-19. It was in Gavan Laird's words "an outsider". No doubt similar thoughts went through the minds of the British workers. The Minister Shirley Baldwin told them in 1926 that they alone had the power to save the British Comintern from the fate that befell outside No. 10 Downing Street. The Comintern was outside, but we can talk about the General Strike later.

From this time henceforth there has been little pretence that the unions have been anything but the mouthpiece of the capitalist order organised inside the workers' movement. The unions were born in 1939 and have become more and more integrated into the apparatus of the ruling class. In times of class quiet (as now) they can often get away with clapping (as outside) the system but as soon as there is any level of class struggle which rocks the boat they suddenly resurface.

and Trades Unionism

as still ahead of its time. On the continent now, unions beyond the include all workers. This unions into contact with

1. The unions are OK but the leaders are bad.

Unions today

Let's have a look at some traditional arguments about unions.

pivotal position in sabotaging the struggle.

1000

haven't the time to develop all the necessary arguments suggested here - the discussion will have to be continued. The final question is - how do we get the millions of workers and file members. This is the most important question. First of all we have to appeal to the majority of workers and file members to remain in the party. This is the most important task. We must not let anyone forget in any forum which presents these questions that the party is for everyone, irrespective of union affiliation to be in the struggle and for elected, responsible, and accountable leaders. We must not let anyone neglect post employment. This is the most important condition of our political view. We abandoned our previous position at the end of the struggle but we must not do this again. We must always struggle on a clear political revolutionary line, the aim of politically preparing wider sections of the working class for the final victory. Without all this, without conscious capitalist organisation we will never create the conditions for the free development of each and every person, the condition for the free development of all.

and the Russian
Revolution
or aberration. The First
World War brought a halt by
reaction and revolution.
In Britain, France,
superseded by the two
world wars.

Douglass' own pamphlet "Refracted Perspective" talks of the dockworkers at Immingham during the 1984-5 strike as "spineless bastards". This may have some truth in it but in one who refuses to criticise his own union this is also the language of sectionalism. What about the stupid bastards in the NUM who accepted the slogan "Coal not Dole". A slogan which condemned the "one in four" of the working class to poverty.

Letters to the Editor



We don't think unions are the main obstacle to winning solidarity action. That rests in the consciousness of the workers themselves. The main obstacle to getting workers to act together is contained in the struggle within their (capitalist) framework so long as the workers let them. In the past the formation of trades unions by themselves was part and parcel of the workers class development as a class, because Marx said a class in itself. Today though capitalism has reached a situation in which it can't develop the workers class as a class. It can't do this at the same time inflicting war, famine and ever greater misery on the working class. In such a political situation trades unions are not simply made up but their role is to continue struggles to unite trades or sections. It is a positive barrier to the working class becoming the revolutionary class which can create a new world system in the image of humanism. This is why we consistently advocate workers make the struggles back into their own hands (even if they start off in the terms that trades unions dictate).

Timex is a case in point. We disagree with you "because Timex has been such a heroic fight because it was one of the best organised unions in Britain". It is true that workers there have received better support from their union than most have over the last decade or so but this is not just a reward for past loyalty to the union. The workers were not prepared themselves to prepare their struggle to other workers. What they failed to do was to link up with other workers in struggle and then again to link up to the national movement of unions. The Timex workers didn't link up with the Yarrow workers or the Leyland Daf workers on Clydeside or with the miners and railworkers. The main ones of these unions also alised their struggles to take in the fact that every struggle today is for all workers. This is what the second part of our message is that workers themselves have to run their own strikes and disputes and they must find means other than the unions to do this because today the unions

Workers' Voice 5

Timex and the Unions

Dear Comrades

One final question. Would you advocate that communists who are miners or miners' helpers (for example) refuse on principle to join union mass meetings or abstain from union-sponsored ballots for strike action?

I would therefore like to know more about the Communists' Workers' Organisation and its policies. Perhaps you could send me a sample of your manifesto to clarify for me the other positions you hold.

Yours in solidarity,

RM

Our Reply

Dear R.
Thanks for your response to the leaflet which we find both serious and welcome since it gives us the chance to clarify the issues you raise.

The second part of our message is that workers themselves have to run their own strikes and disputes and they must find means other than the unions to do this because today the unions

Labour and the Unions – Keeping up the Con-trick

Following their fourth successive General Election defeat the leaders of the Labour Party again started searching for a magic formula to convince people into voting for them next time around.

Alongside the usual Parliamentary games of saying mad things about the other political parties they went in for the other old favourite of selecting a new leader, although this time they managed to select one with a level of charisma equal to a soggy sponge cake. The new leadership group now shows its worth by the star turns in the Hyde Park mass demonstration of the fight against the mine closures.

The general thrust of the political posturing shows no signs of any significant change. Vague and ill-defined commitments to remain of the ruling class, to increase state intervention to increase the profitability of British capitalism. There are also clearly instances where, for example, opposing cuts in spending on the armaments industry for increased spending on ex-Yugoslavia they are prepared to outdo the Government in the ideological and practical preparations for the drift to war.

In order to stay within the mainstream of ruling class thought they remain as keen as ever to distance themselves from the myth of "Unite Power", one of the few things the mass media use to verify the electors. These tensions between the Trade Union leaders who leech off

working class subscriptions and the Labour parliamentarians whose privileges are based on (largely) working class votes.

In the run-up to the Party election in the autumn it is clear that there will be a continuing wave of hot air in the papers and on the TV about the "real" and "political" leadership between the Labour and the Unions. On the one side the centre of the Party leadership and certain Union leaders such as the AEUU will campaign against the Union block vote in order to maintain the distance from the "Union Power" allegations.

Alongside the usual Parliamentary games of saying mad things about the other political parties they went in for the other old favourite of selecting a new leader, although this time they managed to select one with a level of charisma equal to a soggy sponge cake. The new leadership group now shows its worth by the star turns in the Hyde Park mass demonstration of the fight against the mine closures.

The all-powerful camp there are other MP's who believe that they can gain power by appealing to more traditional Labour voters, even in the point of posturing as fighters in the class struggle. That group of windbags, with the "Campaign" group and the left wing of the centre, will form a link with those Trade Union leaders who believe that they might lose their perceived influence and consequently risk losing yet more of their subscription base.

It is of course clear to Marxists and probably equally to the Labour and Trade Union panacea that that is a delusion, precisely because the mass media use to verify the electors. These tensions between the Trade Union leaders who leech off

the Labour Party and Trade Unions both depend on a combination of working-class passivity and decades of misrepresentation of the real nature

of permanent accommodation with capitalism. Funds used to pay pensions to fulltime officials are hardly likely to be used, as they were in the last century, for an in and out struggle by the workers who have paid for them.

Finally to answer the issue of what you specifically want to know, what individual members of the CWO do in relation to the struggles of our class. In our Statutes we state that members are not only allowed to join unions but positively encouraged to do so. However we give them a greater possibility of an audience inside the working class. If you can only go to a meeting if you are a union member then it would be ridiculous to expect freedom of speech. We can call for the meetings to open to all workers and for links with other sectors as well as suggesting ways which break down workers dependence on the unions. However we have no illusions about capturing the majority of our members since we have all seen that such attempts only compromise the would-be revolutionary. The unions don't offer simply front organisations as the Trotskyists do. They are capitalist structures which drain the lifeblood from rank and file militants who become dependent on them. Again our standard allows members to go on strike and to do so as available depending on strike leader or delegate. Dave Darrow's recently laised their struggle to take in the fact that every struggle today is for all workers. This is what

we obviously can't answer all your questions fully without further discussion but we are sending you some of our past publications including a text of a speech comrades recently made to delegates of Dave Darrow's recently laised their struggle to take in the fact that every struggle today is for all workers. This is what

we have done. We intend to edit this for publication in *Workers' Voice 67* (due out soon).

We also enclosed a copy of the second leaflet we have given to you.

Internationalist communist greetings

Jock

(for the CWO).

Page 4 of this issue.

whatever the outcome we know that if they achieve a parliamentary majority all factions will make sure that the workers are still bound and foot to the bosses and their system.

KT

Continued from Last Issue

Imperialism

The New World Order

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was motivated by its need to sell oil to Kuwait, through its invasion itself and to develop imperialism by exploiting the oilfields and the proletariat working there. In short, its annexation was to satisfy the imperialists' thirst for extra territory to thwart that thirst. Republican of debts was never seen by the Iraqi bourgeoisie as an option.

The same economy continues to exist and the conflict supported it must also continue, even if the probable sides in the conflict have changed. At the moment the surviving major imperialist powers do not need it in an entirely different situation (that is, in the context of a world dominated by the conflict between US and USSR imperialism and of a Middle East stability of which was threatened by the Iranian

sustained belief until the reality breaks in: capitalism's crisis is not manageable. Then they will try and solve the crisis by **forcing** each other to pay an unacceptable part of the cost.

A Return to Colonialism?

Because the USSR was economically the weaker imperialism, it was less able to dominate its sphere of influence primarily by economic means. It had to resort as an imperialist at all, it was compelled to resort to military domination of Eastern Europe.

As the US appears to be destined to be economically weaker than Japan and Germany in certain senses (technologically and in terms of availability), although the mass of US capital will be greater, some time in the future does this mean that the US will be forced to resort to direct military domination? The answer appears to be yes, as evidenced by Grenada which is a somewhat peripheral, Panama, which is clearly vital to US interests, and Somalia, despite the complicating factor of UN involvement.

The Somali case is particularly interesting. Given that the US is not there to supply humanitarian aid (such a purpose would be unprecedented in the history of imperialism), are they there? The US appears to be that it is imperialism on the cheap – the US seeks to demonstrate its power where it can do so in order to despatch its forces into accepting US world domination. More interestingly, like Bosnia and Cambodia find no US intervention. These are left to a weak UN to try to deal with.

The Future...

There can be no certainty here, but there seems to be three possibilities. First, Japan and Germany are an alternative to the US; second, Japan draws massive resources from the US; on the other hand, the weakening would be over emphasised. Neither Germany nor Japan is the type of imperialist power necessary to take over the US on its own. This does not mean that the basis for the conflict is removed, but it does mean that both Germany and Japan need allies in that conflict.

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Secondly, the protagonists must be of rough equal strength, as, if a power cannot hope to win against a stronger antagonist, it will retreat and seek to make itself smaller. In reality, that is the stronger power will in general have more enemies. This process is one of manoeuvring; prior to war, and it will become more and more discernible.

In reality, this separation of the process is somewhat schematic as these phases tend to occur together.

Becoming more concrete, the weakening of the US is the result of the US being Japan's material basis for conflict, because it is a weaker economy no longer justifies its dominance. On the other hand, the weakening would not be over emphasised. Neither Germany nor Japan is the type of imperialist power necessary to take over the US on its own. This does not mean that the basis for the conflict is removed, but it does mean that both Germany and Japan need allies in that conflict.

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It should not be forgotten that there is a timebomb ticking away in the crisis-ridden countries of the former USSR.

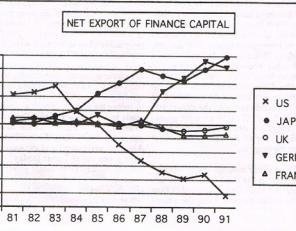
...and Who Pays for It?

The working class is already paying for capitalism's crisis in a hundred and one ways. The bourgeoisie of each imperialism rubs its hands from its recent turn to China (incidentally, present-day Japanese penetration there differs immensely from the US). The capitalist are not today it is a base of economic superiority, and the working class is not. The working class and other neighbours and faces the US which Germany, France, Italy and other countries are reversed, with Germany relying on the EC (or more likely a rump of the EC) and whatever allies it can gather in Eastern Europe.

The Future...

Marxism is not an aid to clairvoyance which enables its adherents to predict the future with infinite precision or without doing any work. What it does do is to provide a framework within which the creativity of history must go about its business. Although the "space" between these limits can never be reduced to zero, the more work that is done the narrower the gap becomes.

For a general perspective we can see that although war is inevitable under imperialism, generalised war between imperialists will not happen until certain conditions have been ful-



The chart displayed here implies some evidence for the theory of capital export. The net export of finance capital is clearly a measure of the strength of an economy as imperialist. It reflects the ability of an economy to generate capital and to invest it in a previous round of export and offer it to the rest of the world than the importer's capitalists, despite any barriers the importing country may erect.

And there has been a visible revolution here. From being the world's largest exporter of finance capital in 1981, the US imported in 1991 roughly 100% of what it did as it previously exported, and Germany and Japan imported in 1991 roughly twice what the US exported a decade earlier.

The figures regarding state indebtedness reveal both the extent to which the crisis is hitting the state and how far away from classical liberalism capitalism has come – rather than cutting back on state "interference" in the economy, the state sticks into debt because that interference is vital.

Having had this brief glance at the actual figures we can now look at some of the causes of that instability (but not in any way determine the fine detail of that instability), we can now look at some of the world's recent history.

Iraq as an Exception?

Was Iraq a potential exception to the rule that a national state no longer had to utilise national independence to develop economic independence? After all, it defied all the "coalition" forces in the Gulf War, apparently to defend that independence.

We must first remember that Iraq's military might was built up by the West because it was their agent. It was the CIA in 1980 who urged him to attack Iran to defend US interest. But when it became clear that Iraq was becoming a major imperialist power, the US and its allies supported the West (which had a profitable arms trade with Iraq until then) pulled the plug. Saddam's regime was left only with debts.

However, this desire to avoid face to face confrontation is dependent on the sustaining of the belief that the imperialist powers can manage their crisis peacefully, negotiating which portion of the burden each carries, and they can only

filled. Firstly, the powers have to become convinced that they cannot manage the crisis peacefully, negotiating the share the burden with smaller instances of offset. With a debt, there is a incentive to expand. But just this is the way for Japanese and German bosses to perform the same trick and deprive the US of this particular competitive advantage, by pushing their workers wages down.

And if workers do not develop the capacity to fight the bosses' little tricks in the trade war, and

Economist, the average real hourly wage of US workers has decreased by 13% over the past decade, while West German and Japanese workers' real hourly wages have offset, with a debt, the increase in exploitation. The second stage is the drift towards trade war, and when trade war becomes war, they can only

Aid to Russia won't buy stability

At the Tokyo meeting of the G7 in April, the seven most powerful countries of the world set up a \$43 billion aid package to Russia. This is nearly double the \$24 billion package they set up at last year's summit in Munich. However, before the aid was foisted that at last world leaders are getting together to do something about the terrible situation in Russia and that may be this could lead to greater cooperation over Yugoslavia. Moreover, Moscow's words in the final words. When we do, any feeling of confidence in the ruling class's ability to work together for the good of humanity will soon be dispelled.

The announcement of this aid package has

of Russia over last winter which held out the prospect of its economic and political collapse. The major powers had to do something in case a disintegration "could plunge Russia into the chaos that has overtaken the Balkans", as a foreign policy adviser to President Clinton put it. Moreover, Moscow's words in the final words. When we do, any feeling of confidence in the ruling class's ability to work together for the good of humanity will soon be dispelled.

The conflicts between the major powers accelerates chaos, but this is not a conscious policy. In order to carry out their imperial ambitions, the great powers must do something in case the sphere of influence descend into chaos and to find themselves hit by the fall-out from such

The US cannot allow this massive arsenal, over 7,500 nuclear war heads and tens of thousands of tactical weapons, shells, mines etc, to fall into the wrong hands. The US is the only power that can process nuclear weapons. The US also wants to stop them going to its other secondary rivals.

The insanity of trying to stabilise a situation in order to better confront one's enemies is taken one step further in the case of Russia. This is the great power that has the largest share of the world's main energy to be its ally. Thus, when Germany and Japan agree to aid Russia they are supporting one of their main rivals and strengthening chaos in Russia is the product of the



been timed to coincide with Yeltsin's referendum campaign. As such it is very much a propaganda exercise. In fact much of the money has been announced previously, and much is simply a renegotiation of debt repayments.

Behind "Western unity", bitter imperialist conflicts

"The new package should be something in which each nation's bourgeoisie is to help the other" (A Japanese official at the Tokyo meeting). This image of a united "west" helping out Russia is very reassuring after months of growing economic difficulties for the major industrial countries of the West. However, this common "concern" for the situation in Russia does not mark a growing cooperation, but a moment where imperialists co-operate.

Confronted with the accelerating destabilisation

collapse of the USSR (see out). These on the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. "Imperialist Russia 60", for a more detailed analysis of the reasons for the collapse), the growing tensions between the great powers are also a product of the imperialist war of all against all. If each nation's bourgeoisie uses every possible means - and military means in particular - to protect its own interests at its rivals' expense, then the only way to do this is to dominate, the least scrap of influence and power.

In reality, the future that capitalism has to offer humanity is the greatest chaos history has ever known. (Manifesto of the 9th Congress of the CCP, 1991)

North Korea: US's new whipping boy

In the last few months North Korea has been at the centre of disputes over its development of nuclear weapons and its declaration of a "semi-war" in response to joint US and South Korean military exercises. It has been dubbed the "new Iraq". However, the fact that these disputes are arising now is neither an accident, nor the work of a maverick, but a consequence of the new imperialist rivals that have developed in the last few years. The two blocks led by US and Russian imperialism. In particular, they are part of the USA's effort to resist any weakening of its power around the globe.

North and South Korea have been forced to confront each other as two rival imperialist powers since they emerged after the Second World War under the auspices of the USSR and the US respectively. The Korean War of 1950-53 was a key moment in the struggle of the two blocks, sacrificing the lives of up to three million workers and poor peasants.

Imperialist reshuffles in the Far East

in the wake of the collapse of the imperialist bloc every nation has been driven to assert its own interests. This has led to new alignments and to new confrontations around the globe.

In the Far East, Japan and China, two nations who were previously members of the American bloc, are today struggling to assert themselves as regional powers with their own imperialist interests. They are both trying to turn themselves towards the Franco-German regroupment.

Moreover, the support given to the US by Russia can only aggravate this situation. If the US can only agree to this situation since it is in the interest of the two powers to do this. All of this gives them a degree of common interest, which was highlighted by the recent visit of the Japanese Emperor to China. This visit is also the more remarkable considering that the two powers have been enemies since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Traditionally, China and Japan have fought each other for the control of this part of the Far East; these rivalries still exist and could be rekindled. However, the main conflict is between the two countries. But for the moment they both have a common interest in resisting the USA's attempts to assert its authority and control in this part of the globe.

Korea: a stake in the imperialist game

It is in this context that Korea has assumed a new importance. On the one hand China seeks to

remain on close terms with North Korea, not least because of its military significance, and on the other it has sought to develop relations with South Korea, principally by giving it official recognition. The purpose of this is to reinforce its position in the region, and it is essential that it is able to become a dominant regional power. This has led to some tensions with North Korea, including attacks on Chinese fishing boats and the blocking of an assassination attempt on the South Korean president.

For the US, South Korea is an important strategic base allowing it to exert influence throughout the Far East.

Today, it has additional importance in that it stands between Japan and China. The US currently has 35,000-38,000 troops there and has including fighter aircraft.

Last year the US suspended its annual military exercise in South Korea. This year, the US has increased its military presence, bringing the US presence to 55,000. At the same time the International Atomic Energy Agency demanded from North Korea access to suspected nuclear warheads and plutonium production facilities, and even of military strikes against these installations. These disputes are first and foremost a pretext for the US to assert its power

in the region. North Korea is playing for the USA a similar role to that played by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Presenting the Stalinist regime of North Korea as a maverick state that refuses to abide by international law and poses a threat to world peace provides the USA with a very useful excuse for throwing its weight around and securing scarcely-veiled USA's rivals.

A second aspect of the USA's tactics is that they are an attempt to force China's position where it has been between North and South Korea. The US hopes that with this plan it could thus frustrate China's overall aims and possibly insert a wedge between it and Japan, since the latter is strongly opposed to North Korea having nuclear arms. North Korea has responded with a warning from the IAEA and threatening a state of "semi-war", closing its border and imposing a curfew. China took a much more cautious line, calling for the dispute to be settled through diplomatic channels, and North Korea agreed to "temporarily" suspend its nuclear programme. At the same time, the US has been pushing for the USA to assert its military strength. *Pavé*

Balkans war shows the irrationality of decadent capitalism

The assertion that the war in the Balkans is irrational and that it has shown in the 'consciousness of evil', and the anarchism of the present conflicts. From the Marxist point of view, however, the term 'irrational' has quite a different meaning to the one given it by the media press and their propagandists. The war in the Balkans doesn't conform to eternal moral values like peace, justice and democracy. For marxists, rejecting the hypocrisy of 'humanitarianism', the war is a symptom of the decay of the economic system in decline and decomposition. It is this system as a whole that has become a dead-end for humanity, and needs to be overthrown by the international struggle of the working class.

Some revolutionaries, however, are still clinging to this humanistic perspective, while aspiring to a marxist analysis of events, believe that the involvement of the great powers in the Balkans has rational economic motives.

'All the leading capitalist powers in the United States have had significant roles to play. British, German, Italian, American bosses have sold arms to the various Yugoslav republics and have supported them either openly or secretly for two basic reasons:

- so they can make profits from arms and munitions sales;

- to keep up links with the republics which might provide them with markets for their own goods and investment opportunities. In other words, they have used the Balkans as a front line in their struggle for imperialist predominance that is underway.' Statement distributed by the International Bureau for the Revolutionary Party (which includes the British group the Communist Workers' Organisation) and the Gruppe Internationalistischer Kommunisten of Austria. Published in Internationalist Communist Review no.11, 1993.

For these reasons, the manoeuvres of the great powers and Yugoslav flow based on financial commercial interests, these powers have supposedly made a rational economic appraisal and consequently expect a return on their 'investment' in the Balkans.

However, the great imperialist powers do not neglect their commercial interests and rivalries for one minute. It is quite wrong, however, to cite these interests and rivalries as the 'basic' reason for the imperialist intervention of the great powers in Yugoslavia and elsewhere. Since an expansion, they simply don't conform to reality. Yugoslavia, like the rest of Eastern Europe, was bankrupt even before the present destruction and dismemberment of the empire further added to its insolvency. Between 1986-91, Yugoslavia had average annual inflation rates of over 300%. In the last decade the economy declined 2.5% on average per year. Any markets and investment opportunities, after the devastation of the civil war, will be extremely limited, and it is possible which the enormous cost to the great powers of being a 'military player' in the present situation.

Nor is the present conflict a conflict for arms. On the contrary, the United States, allied to the imperialist forces, and the United Nations forces under their domination, are looking to establish their own military presence. Furthermore the US has continued to insist that the Bosnian Muslims, whom it calls a 'temporarily dormant' army, should be to the 'victims' side in the war. The basic reason for the participation of the main imperialist powers in this conflict is not for the prospect of economic gain. On the contrary, in this conflict, and others to come, the empire has lost its main weapon, the support of capitalism's decadence, a logic which flows from the economic impasse of the system and further contributes to the bankruptcy of the latter. *FS*

Marxism explains reality with the method of historical materialism. This means searching for the ultimate causes of unfolding events, such as

wars, in the dynamics of the relations of production and not in the 'consciousness of evil', and the anarchism of the present conflicts. Historical materialism is not a science. Historiography is.

In the ascendant phase of capitalism wars did often give a powerful push to economic development, and were therefore frequently 'adventurous' and 'risky'. Capitalism was then, when engaged in them, 'on the march'. This was, tended to be restricted to the immediate combatants, involved a limited amount of the warring nations' resources, which tended to be more than compensated by the economic enrichment of the victor.

Capitalist decadence changed this aspect of the armed competition that took place between capitalist powers. New outlets for the development of capitalist productive forces decreased in relative terms. War became a means to fight over the existing economic resources. As a result, war became a 'whirlpool' which drew all the main capitalist powers into its vortex.

War this century has squandered human life in tens of millions, both in civilian and military sectors. It has also brought an enormous amount of accumulated labour: buildings, transportation, factories. It leads to the ruin of the entire economic system. Economic activity is increasingly restricted to the pursuit of war. The inherent laws of capitalist production, which constantly agitate the historical limits - tend to destroy the productive forces rather than develop them. The more capitalist sinks into the crises of its decadent phase, the more the logic of militarism imposes itself, even though militarism itself is no longer capable than other policies of providing a solution to the economic contradictions of the system.

In the Balkans today the manoeuvres of the great powers, as well as the war between the local gangs, are from the point of view of the world no longer economic rationality. The context of generalised imperialist rivalry forces each state to participate in the deadly game. The United States is trying, with its British ally, to re-assess its hegemonic position. In Germany, Germany, is seeking to carve out a sphere of influence with a view to creating an imperialist bloc of its own. The inevitable result of these manoeuvres will be a 'Yugoslavia' without the future in more destruction, both through military action and through the crippling cost of this action on the already bankrupt economies of the imperialist powers, large and small.

In the present period we also face further aspects of the irrationality of imperialist war. The decomposition of capitalism has created a counter-tendency to the formation of new imperialist blocs: the struggle of 'east against west', particularly the peripheries of world capitalism, which creates the possibility that war will spiral out of control.

When revolutionaries argue that the dynamic of capitalist war can be explained by the search for arm sales, or for market opportunities in distant countries, they are not being absurd. They minimise the seriousness of the world situation facing the working class, mask the decadence and decomposition of capitalism and obscuring the reality of the historic alternative: socialism or barbarism.

War is one of the most decisive decisions that the working class has to face, not only because it is the main victim of war, as cannon fodder and as a labour force subjected to the logic of capitalist reproduction, but also because war is one of the essential factors in the development of a consciousness of the bankruptcy of capitalism, of the barbarism towards which it is leading the human race. *FS*

The IRBP also reduced the explanation for the Gulf War to one commercial interest - a war for oil. Blindness to the global stakes of imperialist conflict in this period is not new. For

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WORLD REVOLUTION

Monthly paper in Britain of the International Communist Current

No 212 March 1998

75p

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World economic crisis,
military tensions in the Gulf

Capitalism proves its bankruptcy

Ever since the collapse of the eastern bloc in 1989, the bourgeoisie has been assuring our ears with its message about the 'failure of communism'. Last year, in the anniversary of the October revolution, it intensified this campaign by publishing a series of books about the 'crimes' of communism, using the old excuse of mixing up the gigantic revolution of 1917 with the Stalinist counter-revolution that was its gravestard.

But what the events of late 97 and early 98 show above all is that the real failure, the real bankruptcy, is that of capitalism, not communism.

The financial convulsions in south east Asia are a symptom of the gravity of the failure of the world economic crisis. One aspect of this so-called dragon and tiger economies collapsed under a vast heap of debt, and the consequences of this collapse are bringing ominously to mind the industrial countries - who are also being kept alive by the deadly medicine of credit, decadent capitalism's 'anesthetic' to its chronic lack of markets. Already, the workers of south east Asia are being asked to pay the cost of the crisis, through millions of redundancies and mass expulsions of 'im-

migrant' workers. And it won't be long before this latest plunge in the world economy results in massive attacks on the working class in the industrial centres, who have already endured years of misery, living standards falling.

At the same time, the war preparations of the great imperialist powers are intensifying. Instead of fighting the war of all against all, as was the case in the first world war, the imperialist powers are now fighting the war build-up against the 'butcher of Baghdad' lies the merciless confrontation between the great imperialist gangsters for control of the Middle East oil reserves.

The more capitalist states retreat, the more the rivalries between the great powers shift directly onto the military terrain, threatening more and more areas of the planet with war and chaos. And as always, it's the exploited

class which is the prime victim of this, not only because it's the workers who will have to

sweat harder to pay for the military expenses of the ruling class, but also because, in the final analysis, they are the ones who will be asked to pay the price of capitalist sacrifice as cannon-fodder in capitalist wars.

All this reveals the true face of capitalism. It should sweep away the workers' false hopes and illusions. Capitalism is not just maintained by the bourgeoisie. Capitalism has nothing to offer us but misery and massacres. But while fight towards war is the only option left, the impasse of its economic system, the only way out is revolution. The proletariat has a very different solution to offer. The struggle of the proletariat for the defence of the working class interests is the perspective of a new society, a society free of exploitation and war, can itself become a mass force.

This was precisely the historic significance of the events of 1917 in Russia and 1918 in Germany. In those heroic days, the working class showed not only that it could paralyse the imperialist war machine, forcing the bourgeoisie to end four years of slaughter; by

Imperialist conflict behind the Gulf crisis

With the signing of the agreement between Saddam and UN General Secretary Kofi Annan, the immediate threat of military action against Iraq has been lifted. But this does not mean we would be safer, a place where rational peace negotiations can make warfare obsolete? Such illusions are being peddled by the media, but they vanish the minute you start to look at the reality of what is about to happen. The mavericks like Saddam are less than the real mavericks like Bush, who is the leader of the USA's most serious imperialist rivals - countries like France, Germany, Russia and Japan.

Following the collapse of the eastern bloc in 1991, the US has rapidly expanded its influence in the western bloc, and the USA's former allies had less reason to bow to its authority.

For this confrontation was not really about Saddam, nor really about the principle of statehood. It was about who was to rule in the

USA's most serious imperialist rivals - countries like France, Germany, Russia and Japan.

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to defend their imperialist interests in Yugoslavia, supporting the Serbian camp against both Croatia (backed by Germany) and Bosnia (backed by France). This was the first major power to prevent the Americans from intervening directly into the situation. Britain's conflict with the US over Ireland is another expression of the division of the 'Special Relationship' between Britain and the USA.

There are plenty of other examples of this challenge to what the USA calls 'world leadership'. In Israel, the Netanyahu government managed to prevent the USA from intervening in the Middle East peace process, and the US, and privately sabotaged the Middle East peace process which had been such a triumph of American diplomacy. This has resulted in a massive loss of influence in this critical strategic region.

It worked for a brief period. In 1991, all the major western powers, as well as the different regions in the Middle East, agreed to the armistice with Saddam. But since then, the USA's 'policy of "every man for himself" has more and more gained the upper hand, and the situation has shifted dramatically.

The most spectacular expression of the USA's crisis of authority has been the breakdown of its historic alliance with Britain, on the latter's initiative, from 1994 onwards. For more than two years, France and Britain acted in concert

to defend their imperialist interests in Yugoslavia, supporting the Serbian camp against both Croatia (backed by Germany) and Bosnia (backed by France). This was the first major power to prevent the Americans from intervening directly into the situation. Britain's conflict with the US over Ireland is another expression of the division of the 'Special Relationship' between Britain and the USA.

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Continued on page 5

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Continued on page 5

sh imperialism manoeuvres against the Northern Ireland 'peace talks'

writing the future of the multi-Northern Ireland would appear balanced. Following the RUC's claims that the murders of a drug dealer and the leader of the UDA were the work of Fein was barred from the talks by the British. The subsequent bombings in

to a way of understanding what's going on in Northern Ireland without getting lost in the details of events - because the key to what's going on in Northern Ireland lies in the antagonisms between imperialist powers.

Free-for-all after 1989

leaders were attributed to the Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, and to Community IRA, an anti-IRA except Sinn Fein supporters. A paramilitary group (or the Ulster Defence Army) Sinn Fein supporters, the UDA, is behind the killing as it is believed that "Political dialogue is not running out for the loyalists". The UDA is a paramilitary group that "there can be no Sinn Fein re-entering the politics" (ibid) with the clear threat that "there will be no peace talks" (ibid). Tony Blair there would be a "out from the talks".

To repeat the main point made by our author in WR 211 "it is necessary to appreciate in the period 1989-93, the shift in the political situation, dominated by the US and the USSR, and the situation has been marked by an intensification of the conflict, pursued its own interests, from a position of a bloc leader. In the case of it has been taking a lot of time that is necessary to influence and put pressure on British policies. And one of the most important points that it has at its command is the influence of the US and South, while the links of US influence with Flann Fail are long established, recently it has been intensifying the US-Soviet Union relations".

For the "peace talks" they "were as US imperialism on the British Isles".

he said, Sinn Féin are giving to them what they will be rushing back to if they do not get it. McLaughlin said: "we will not be there to negotiate a deal, but we will be there to support our own people". In addition to this Gerry Adams, who the IRA had any connection with, and insisting that the ceasefire ceases, said that "Sinn Féin has no interest over this current situation". The comments volunteered by the officials, this is one which points imperialism is profoundly adaptable. "peace process" can only go in the direction of loss of British control of Northern Ireland. The Labour government has been a major factor of Northern Ireland as their predecessors which they underlined last year, with the reinforcement of British troops and continued support for the marching and Blair's basic guarantees to unionists. "peace talks" can only lead to concessions which are not in the interests of British imperialism. With this framework it is easier to see Sinn Féin were so exasperated at the

tion from the talks. Martin McGuinness identified the Republicans' enemies - "we are seeing a lynch mob of Ulster Unionists led by the British government" (*Guardian* 17/2/98) - while Gerry Adams said "I am absolutely pissed off. We tried to make this thing work and those who have no interest in making it work

circumstances which would make it impossible for Sinn Féin to get back on the talk." While not being specific this seems to be a clear admission that, in response to a loyalist offensive orchestrated by the British state, the IRA would be forced to formally break its ceasefire, and lose Sinn Féin's credibility as a part of the "peace talks". As a worried McLaughlin expressed his fears: "Any talk of conspiracies could take place which would prevent Sinn Féin's move back into those circumstances which would make it impossible for Sinn Féin to get back on the talk." (ibid).

Twists and turns of Anglo-US relations
While the US has been using Ireland as a means of showing its opposition to the British

Unions' phoney opposition to Labour's austerity

in the government and the trades engaged in a conflict has been of the *foremost* since 1919 (ibid. 18/29). The unions are more specific when they say that 'a ballot on recognition should be held' because 'both sides stand the unions and a Labour Party, arguing that it is by 50% of those voting. On the other hand, the unions are not to be 'in a decisive moment'. In this, the unions are in what is called a 'strategic' position, in the sense of the bourgeoisie's strategic balance of class forces.

Labour and the unions

of the Labour government did not contradict the tendencies of the unions, for the unions to themselves from government in order to play their role of phonies openly, would require the ruling class to accept the formal traditional Labour party line.

Before the election a central 'modernisation' of the Labour erosion of these links, culminated in the suggestion that they might be

November 2001

at the same time the escalation crisis, that in the situation in Asia, compelled the working class to increase tasks on the ruling class still further made it all the more necessary for parts of the bourgeois state to represent their class as effectively as possible.

Thus, despite the fact that the government has a central place in this crisis: attacks by the government reinforce unions' image as the only defended working class, while the strengthening unions' grip makes it easier to implement

either. During the election the two parties had a double game. On the one hand Labour was to be seen as the party that had won a number of strikes for us, while the unions have had a number of victories, such as that of the miners in July (see *WR*) while Labour has maintained its stance, allowing unions back to work on one hand but refusing to back them on the other. In this way the unions have been split and the Labour party, to make up for this, has been able to win the election.

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various unions, albeit well-lived, unions, *transition* to the rule of the bourgeoisie wreaks of

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ain's nurses will be angry and disappointed that the new government has failed to deliver a decent deal for the profession" (Malcolm Wing, Unison). (All quoted in *FT* 30/1/98).
* In preparation for the budget, the TUC's submission called for an additional £3.3bn to be spent on the least well off and for public spending to grow by at least 2.25% per year in real terms.
* The TUC is also calling for a minimum wage

bourgeoisie makes the working class pay

caused by the tremors in Asian
shares and money markets is far
from over. The ruling class is keeping very
quiet, but the real economy is in a
state of collapse. The only way to
overcome the crisis is to impose
redundancies, but has already
done so by 10%. Asiana has imposed
on 8,000 staff.

the unending, violent attacks in the region. They give the lie to all of the 'bright' future ahead of us. These attacks were already unfolding in the region during the Pacific War, and were to continue through the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

for the earthquake in the Pacific among the best performing of the '90s'. Today, the situation has been worsened by the extent of the crisis of the austerity plans imposed on itself and by the pressure of the Japanese Yachtan are bankrupt. In Thailand and Indonesia, the crisis is doing terrible damage. More than 100,000 people have already lost their jobs. The unions have forecast a 10% reduction in redundancies for 1998. In Thailand, there were riots broke out in January 1998.

of the dragons, attacks on the working class in Asia

Asian crisis of 1994, the attacks came slightly delayed, but, as, members of the Japanese banking community brought with them millions of dollars in cash. The tragedy has not been the most dramatic, but it has been the most sudden and the most severe, both been hit by the shock. The whole series of companies, and the Japanese banking sector have been hit by the shock, and the street. According to the *House of Representatives* are necessary, *“to defend their sons”*. And this is the reason why the Japanese government has not been able to law less off-yours. Where unemployment does not exist, the government is not able to do anything. Even experts do not direct us to escape the effects of the Korean, Japan Air not only plans

At the heart of the aggravation is the fact that despite massive unemployment in the

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ction in state and electric-sacked. The cities have bankruptcies of laid-off car dealers. Dozens are confronted with exploiting the less and inex- tinct to the rotten

phobia. The expulsion of Anti-Chinese and ethnic and. When we China, where sacrificed in the, the immi- and Latin catastrophic al chaos has

ment in the Eastern Länder. Unemployment has already risen to the highest levels since the war, and will go on getting worse.

still insisted and maintained that the *socialist* government was putting greater pressure on wages in the central countries, particularly in the '35-week' week already in effect in several countries. The government of the *socialist* party in Belgium, and due to be enforced in France by July 1950. This policy amounts to 'Job blackmail', and a reduction in wages. The *socialist* government has also decided to increase the *minimum wage* and higher taxes will help it to compete in the commercial war (not to mention that the IMF will have to sacrifice benefits for its 'rewards' in exchange for working conditions increasing 'flexibility', in other words the precariousness of working conditions, which are becoming the norm. On every question, from education to employment, from health to pensions, austerity plans that do not admit that they are designed to plunge the workers of the developed countries deeper into poverty.

If the ruling class stays so discreet about the measures it is getting together internationally, on the massive attacks falling on every sector, in every country, it is because it fears the questions the workers might ask about the bankruptcy of its system. This is why it maintains confusion and unleashes endless ideological campaigns. The proletariat cannot let itself be lulled by all this talk. Only in struggle can it forge its unity and its consciousness, the only weapons which will really spring the traps of the ruling class. Only thus can it develop its fight against capitalism. W

***U*nique conference opposes clarification**

had to find a form which uses a form of concession to this critique no.23, our emphasis). Democracy, if we listen to the conference we hear on the "Social-democracy has not been in class, because it is bound

of this conference, a glossy and expensive book, whose inside cover informs us that we are an independent... scholarly rejecting the concept of socialism in one country, and the possibility that a country can be both socialist and undemocratic, it is that the problems of our time are the necessity for democratic components of society. The absence of control leads to an inefficient, and hierarchically structured

in different ways according to society (...) [Critique's] endeavour is to develop Marxist political economy both in theory and in practice. It is also in this Tiekint of Glasgow University, a Centre for Socialist Theory and Mick Cox of Queens University, fact, what we have here is an journal run, not by Marxists, but by Marxists and Anti-Marxists. And this is important because Universities is an important part of its ideological apparatus and part they to bankroll a revolutionary trialised itself, and has abandoned industrial policy in an game of the game of finance capital. The only way to do this is to struggle for democratisation of the economy. It is quite the contrary. 'A space' opening up on the left. If it is to be from its mistakes and failings, decades, then it can only be to fill this space, and profit from the upgrade of the political reality which is only going to happen. It is this in idea of a 'space' we find the key to the re-opening of the meeting. In the present situation of the crisis is certainly

critique this may not be so obvious. *Critique* and the speakers at these are full of denunciations of socialism and Stalinism. But when we scratch the surface, we find that the *Freudian* and *psychoanalytic* polished up and given a *Her* are some examples. The *ex*-not socialist, but then was it not? According to *Critique*, it is a different form of society, which trying to "enter the market". Stalinism *being* in order to control the ability of an upsurge in the class for a small minority, the ultimate goal of that struggle posed. This minority, composed of the *Freudian* and *psychoanalytic* positions, represents a re-awakening of the revolutionary spirit in the working class. It is fairly obvious that this class is not just going to sit and happen. On the contrary, it is the threat posed by the working class. Against the class struggle, the unions first and foremost, w

“both force and workers” (*Critique*),¹ as well as for social speakers at the same time. In the hand that “held the workers,” but it has “nothing to do with the other

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the French Trotskyists that the Socialist Party in the 1970s, that defended 'workers' state', and that has consequently chums of the class. On the other there were *R* groups which like genuine communists announced the anti-warism at the drop of a hat, specialists in pronouncements in opposition to 'out-dated' Communists.

struggle while, question of the is also being of politicised revolutionary potential strengths of the workers that the ruling block and let this to combat the bosses at all levels. employs its trade also attacking

debate on the 'failure of social democracy' was an important clarification within the workers' movement. But it was closed many decades ago. If Critique has chosen to revive it now, it is not because it has anything worth saying (as the speeches at the conferences showed) but to deliberately use it against the advancement of consciousness in the working

so now and then. The state - that is to say the bourgeoisie - was weary of the rôle of *écrivain* and *philosophe*, of the general, of the generalissimo, as they were then called. Stalinism, however, was to be the last refuge of the bourgeoisie. They were to be the last refuge of the bourgeoisie against the working class. The ICC intervened to cut through this confusion and expose these enemies of the working class. Together with the Communist Workers Organisation, and the Internationalist organisation of the Communist Left with a presence in Britain, that also took part in the meeting, we defended the absolute necessity of creating a new party, a new party of the organisations of the working class from those of the ruling class. If we are to talk of the "betrayal" of socialism, then there is only one betrayal, and that means failing to defend the working class - the betrayal of 1917, when the social-democratic parties supported the imperial war and in doing so passed over to the side of the bourgeoisie. They have never been anything but an arm of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Stalinism, for its part, was the last refuge of the bourgeoisie against Russia and represented the interests of Trotskyism in the war of 1939, of World War II on the side of the bourgeoisie against the working class. The left umbrella, *Umbrella*, is only the extreme left of the "cultural" left. *Umbrella* gathers under its "left" umbrella, *Critique*, which is the only extreme left of the "cultural" left.

capitalism and, far from having anything to offer the proletariat, is its most dangerous enemy.

There is only one current that has stood firm on the defence of the working class since the defeat of the world revolutionary wave in the 1920s: the current of the Communist Left: the Dutch, German, Italian and French Lefts and their modern heirs. The line between the Communist Left and the left of capital is a line drawn in workers' blood shed in counter-revolution and world war. To attempt to deny that line, as *Critique* and its accomplices do, is, in effect, to renounce the Left.

Trotskyists fuel pacifist illusions

The threat of mass bombing of civilians in Iraq by the American and British airforces - even if it has been temporarily averted - exposes again the barbaric irrationality of capitalism and its incapacity to offer a perspective other than endless war to those around the world. The development of a million crises in the Middle East and elsewhere can help awaken in the working class a consciousness of the necessity to overthrow decadent capitalism, in which war is endemic, and create a communist society.

Revolutionary organisations play a essential role in exposing the reality of war which the bourgeoisie tries to hide its murder and destruction. They must also show the working class that it must continue the defence of its own immediate interests against imperialism. The struggle to pay for war, a defence that is also a precondition for achieving the ultimate goal of the class struggle.

The bourgeoisie's "pacifism" is a lie. The world must be open to the perspectives of the proletariat nor does it leave the revolutionary organisation a free field within which it can intervene. Not only does it in the official media in the bourgeois press, but also the aims and objectives of its military adventures, but it also has a spectrum of left forces to distort the emergence of class consciousness in order to ensure that the working class does not become necessary, mobilise it behind the banners of nationalism. Of these forces the most hypocritical apologists for imperialist war are the leftists of Trotskyist origin who falsely claim to support international socialism and proletarian revolution.

Reframing pacifist illusions.
"Don't let them do that again", "No war in the Gulf", "No blood for oil", "Don't bomb Iraq", "Welfare not warfare" have been the slogans of the imperialists' Workers Party.
 At first sight these slogans are reasonable. But these slogans deliberately leave out who is to achieve that and how. They leave in confusion exactly what must be clarified: that the working class by itself, without the entire apparatus of imperialism can bring about peace. No fraction of the bourgeoisie can because its system is war. This ambiguity of

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Imperialist conflicts
behind the
Gulf crisis

Arab countries attended the Islamic conference in Iraq - a country which USA defines as a terrorist regime, and which also does not re-establish links with the UN. The US's principal rivals are specifically Germany. The danger that the growing anti-Americanism in the Middle East would open the door to other great powers has been very graphically by the US press, which when the US military stepped in to avert a clash with Iraq over the expulsion of the American component of the UN weapons inspection team.

Facing this situation, the USA decided to respond to Saddam's most recent act of disobedience - the refusal to open the presidential palaces to the UN inspection team - with an immediate deployment of US military forces to the threat a bombing operation that would be much closer to the holocaust of '91 than to the damp squibs of 1994 and 1996. But this was not the view of America's political élites since '91 has been depicted very openly by its inability to mobilise the other great powers, not to mention the regional powers of the Middle East, in support of the operation. Clinton and Rumsfeld were supposed to be making threatening noises about the danger of a third world war. This was rhetoric on his part, because Britain is not the only country that was during the Cold War. But it was still a significant relation of the freezing up of the relations between America and Russia. France has also been involved in a series of military strikes, with Chirac making emotional speeches about the women and children who would die

lest leftists in front of the workers' illusions is dubious - such slogans are supposed to be *revisionist* - encouraging the working class to act on its present illusions in the peaceful intention of its exploiters in order to go through negative experiences and thus reach, in the mythical future, revolutionary class consciousness.

The Trotskyist movement which puts forward such slogans tries to hide its murder and destruction. They must also show the working class that it must continue the defence of its own immediate interests against imperialism. The struggle to pay for war, a defence that is also a precondition for achieving the ultimate goal of the class struggle.

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Mobilising workers behind the left wing

The SWP tell workers to join protests, demonstrations and rallies for 'peace', organised by the Labour Party left, by the trade unions and CND. They provide no evidence that the left can "foster" the idea that the working class, even when it awards itself peace, and in respect human life instead of profits. The vast arm industry and military sector, it would seem, could be transformed into education and health services.

The Marxist left in the First World took up the slogan "*Turn the imperialist war into a civil war*", leaving no doubt that peace could only be achieved through revolution. The left wing illusions in the pacifist wing of the bourgeoisie as do revolutions today. In contrast leftists actively encourage these illusions.

From pacifism... to imperialism

Leftist pacifism, like all pacifism, is doubly hypocritical. The pacifism of the leftists in Britain is linked to their class support for imperialism, and for US and Soviet imperialism.

In Britain, workers should "work for peace", in Iraq support it.

In the left-wing world, despite the dominant

hypocrisies of every corner of the planet, oppressed nations can supposedly liberate themselves and weaken imperialism and therefore should be supported. Iraq, despite its obvious pro-imperialist policies, is not the left's category by the leftists and is therefore eligible for proletarian sacrifice.

While the SWP might be relatively subtle in saying that a group of revolutionaries

should not be in the right and so should be supported, as though imperialists were merely a result of a mistaken policy rather than the life-blood of capitalism

if they went ahead. Japan and Germany, as is their wont, have been more docile; but Japan announced that it would not give any financial support to the military adventure in the Gulf (as far as far as to do with 91) and Chancellor Kohl made a point of reminding US representatives, sent to Europe to console support that the US had supported the intervention in the First World War. The majority of the Arab states refused to associate themselves with America's military build-up, or, if it was too difficult for the US to accept, as in the case of Kuwait, made plain their lack of enthusiasm.

Of all the greater British alone has shown a solid shoulder to the powers in this crisis. But this has been for contingent reasons, and does not have the same effect as the Baghdad regime that France does, and made it clear that its position on the Gulf crisis is nothing above all by Britain's

either way, the challenge to their authority

outcome of this crisis has depended to a large extent on Saddam's moves, with the Americans threatening to use military force if he did not give up. In any case, the USA stood to lose however the war turned out. If they did intervene, it would only increase the antagonism towards them; if they didn't, they would appear to lack the necessary resources to defend for "world leadership". Either way, the challenge to their authority could only grow.

The Annan settlement

It's in this context - the weakening of US authority across the globe, and particularly the Middle East - that we have to examine the significance of the Annan-Kofi deal. Chancellor Kohl has come to an "independent" UN mission, and Clinton's insistence that he would have to study the deal in detail before agreeing to it. The effect of this deal, however, appears to be that it will not be a US intervention, but corresponded to the real needs of US imperialism. Right up to the time of the Annan-Kofi deal, the US line in the US ruling class was almost certainly in favour of military strike. And yet the US was prepared to play the diplomatic card. Despite the continued American trip and an "independent" UN mission, and Clinton's insistence that he would have to study the deal in detail before agreeing to it, the effect of this deal, however, appears to be that it will not be a US intervention, but corresponded to the real needs of US imperialism. Right up to the time of the Annan-Kofi deal, the US line in

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America's failure to go ahead with the military option was the direct result of its inability to find the other imperial powers behind it, and to find the resources that the use of force would only increase its lack of international support. The resort to diplomacy was merely making the best of a bad job. It's a "soloist" intervention, but it is not a "soloist" war, not least that Saddam has emerged out of this crisis with a much improved image, both at home and abroad. The Muslim world, particularly Arab leaders who stood up to the US. He has shown that it pays to exploit the differences between the great powers, and this can only encourage others to do the same. But especially, the US can be using the virtues of diplomacy backed by the threat of force, but its difficulties in actually carrying out this threat can only expose its weakness and so isolate the US, who seek to put its world hegemony into question.

And that, paradoxical thought it might seem, is precisely why America cannot renounce the use of force, and to play the diplomatic card.

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need for clarity on the union question

The role of the unions

state to deliver a real blow not only to the proletariat in Britain but internationally. The *internationalisation* for its *sectoral* character was the *internal* reason of the crisis, which, as a result of the trade unions, as organisations of the working class, was not that some "sectors" or "ranks" had betrayed their class, but that the union structure as a whole had capitulated to the bourgeoisie and the interests of the capitalist state. The working class was responsible to the state from the bourgeois point of view in that the working class believed that these organisations were their own and fought for them as they had in the past" (Wright, op. cit.). The defeat of the unions was used to drive the working class into the international communist wave, although Stalinism played an important part in this - as the ICP correctly pointed out - the unions' integration into the state was an even more potent factor in ending and finally demolishing the working class.

the main unions in the General Strike is the idea of unification. The history of the past 30 years has not left it unaffected: it has seen that the state has increasingly played an important role in the state's unions as a way of controlling them. This has led to a split in the unions. This has led to a split in the unions, as this is clearly in a 'half-way' position between 'Class War' and National unionism. In this view, nationalisation unions have been integrated into the state because they accept the hour-rate and the state's hierarchy. But they are not based on the state. (For a more detailed analysis of the position see: 'No such thing as a Red Union' *World Revolution* no. 172, March 1977.) And while for the ICP the main unions are 'nationalist', in the past they have been 'internationalist'. The 'international' unit is not because it is 'class-united', but because it is considered as such by the nearness of combat. Workers who belonged to

the Communist' (sic). The IPC also supported the NUM, for very much the same reasons as during the UK miners' strike. The IPC's support for the NUM was not only led to its supporting the miners' strike, but also supported the miners' strike as 'radical' unions, but also supported the miners' strike as 'radical' unions, and file union movements which the bourgeoisie threw up in order to maintain the bourgeoisie's hold over the class. Thus, although the bourgeoisie denounces the role of the unions, it nevertheless employs them in order to maintain its hold over the class. Liverpool dockers' strike within the context of the miners' strike, the IPC doesn't denounce the role of the dock shop workers who have been the backbone of the unions' manoeuvre (see *Comintern*, 1970, 'Interventions in the Liverpool dockers' strike').

The IPC is to stop ending up, despite their formations, defending these radical forms of capitalist state, it's to make a real critique of capitalist opportunism, a position on the unions and the working class.

erstand that: "Under decadent capitalism the revolutionary struggle cannot take on the form of the union form. The revolutionary struggle must be mass, generalised, and direct struggle. It cannot revert back into the shell of an organisation built for reforms, still less when reforms themselves are impossible" (Trade unions against the working class, page 42).

Communist Left: write to ICP Editions, PO Box 52, Liverpool L69 &AL. This group is one of the current that publishes *Il Partito Comunista* in Italy. *Il Partito* split from the principal 'International Communist Party' in the early 70s, in particular around the unionisation. It has tended to be the most sectarian of the Bordighist groups, almost never acknowledging the existence of other groups in

regarding the example of other groups in proletarian camp. So far, all efforts by the *Communist Left* in Britain to establish minimal contact with other Bordighist groups have been ignored. We shall show in future articles, that the *Communist Left* has been very clear that other Bordighist groups are beginning to move away from their traditional isolation, and we have no doubt that the *Partito/Communist Left* will eventually be affected by this movement. We thus call on comrades of *Communist Left* to make a public response to this article.

Continued from page 8

The Communist Manifesto of 1848: Fundamental weapon of the workers' struggle against capitalism

working class to set up its own political rule—the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as it was referred to in other writings of the same period.

Very relevant to this day like prospect of the overthrow of the state. Political power and the state were only a necessity in a society divided into classes; since the proletariat had no interest in forming itself into a new exploiting class, but was capable of doing so without abolishing the old divisions. It followed that the advent of communism meant the end of politics as a particular sphere, and the end of the state. As the *Manifesto* puts it: "when in the course of development, the class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. It will be then the armed power of the whole people, and in this sense it will be a public power, but not a political power, since the majority are deprived of property".

Whereas the dictatorship of the proletariat, is the class power which constitutes the basis of society, rising from the fact that the proletariat, as the ruling class, is the only class which, by overthrowing the state, becomes the ruling class in the state system in which proletarians are crushed under the heel of a class of bourgeois, idle bourgeois and parasites. The *Manifesto* adds: "it will then be the turn of the state to be overthrown by the state, by Marx as a result of the disappearance of classes, and the Moloch of a bureaucratic machine set up by Stalinism".

Finally, what is important is where there is the internationalist rallying cry which concludes the *Manifesto* and the theory of "socialism in one country" which served to justify capitalist and imperialist militarism in the name of defending the "socialist fatherland"! Only a river of blood.

But after the October revolution, in making a stand cry out the so-called "values of communism", there are among its paid intellectuals certain more subtle ideologues who seek to set Marx and Lenin by claiming that the October revolution is not the result of the internationalist workers' movement at the end of last century. An "orthodoxy" which today as yesterday, seeks to turn Marx into a harmless icon and calls on the workers to "defend the revolution" with a passion in direct proportion to their fear of the proletarian revolution.

Proletarian revolution in 1917 was not only the revolutionary seizure of power, could become a reality within the confines of a single country, was as far as the minds of Molotov and Engels as well as of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks who led the October revolution in 1917, and of the international fractions which resisted the resistance to the Stalinist counter-revolution, which encapsulated itself precisely in the monstrous theory of "socialism in one country".

Mars and Lenin against Stalin

Against the Stalinist line, as well as of those repeat ex-Stalinists who have now become knights in the battle against communism, who claim that the Stalinist regimes in the USSR and elsewhere, were merely the state capitalist regimes in the USSR and elsewhere, it is necessary to say loud and clear that Stalinism has on every level been the negation of the general principles of Marx and Engels. For 150 years has been the doctrinal body of the workers' movement.

What is important is that between communism defined in the *Manifesto* as "an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all", and the Stalinist regimes of terror and super-

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